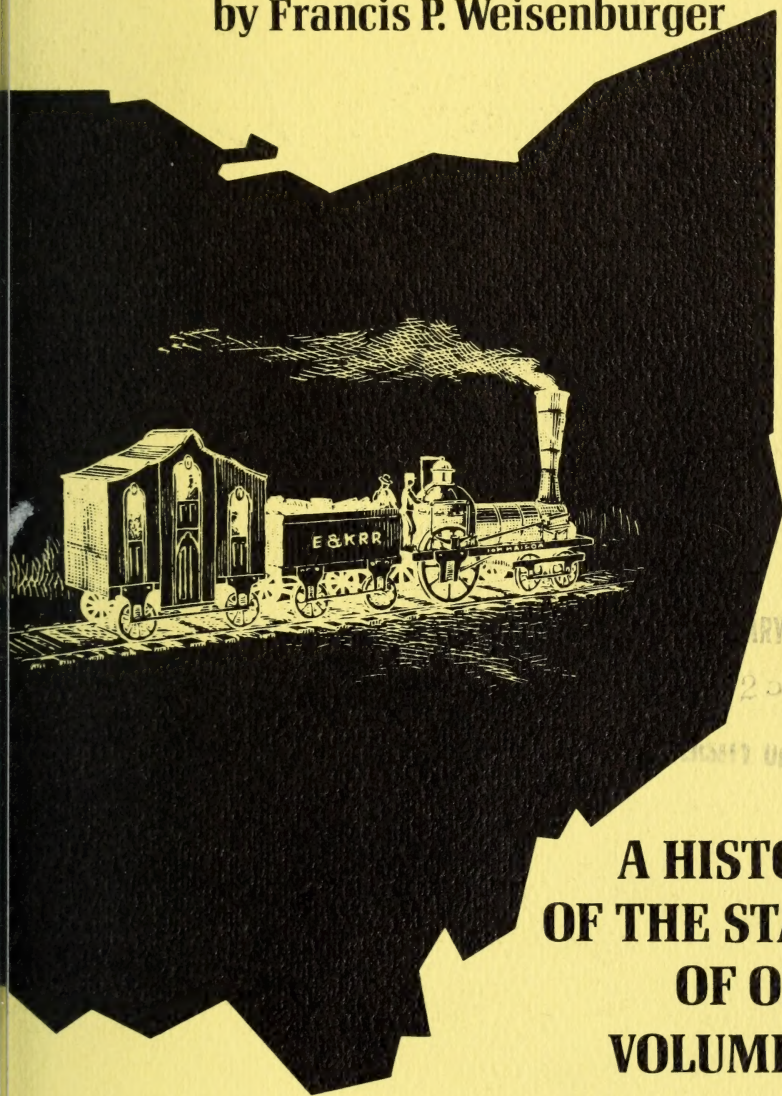


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THE PASSING OF THE FRONTIER: 1825-1850

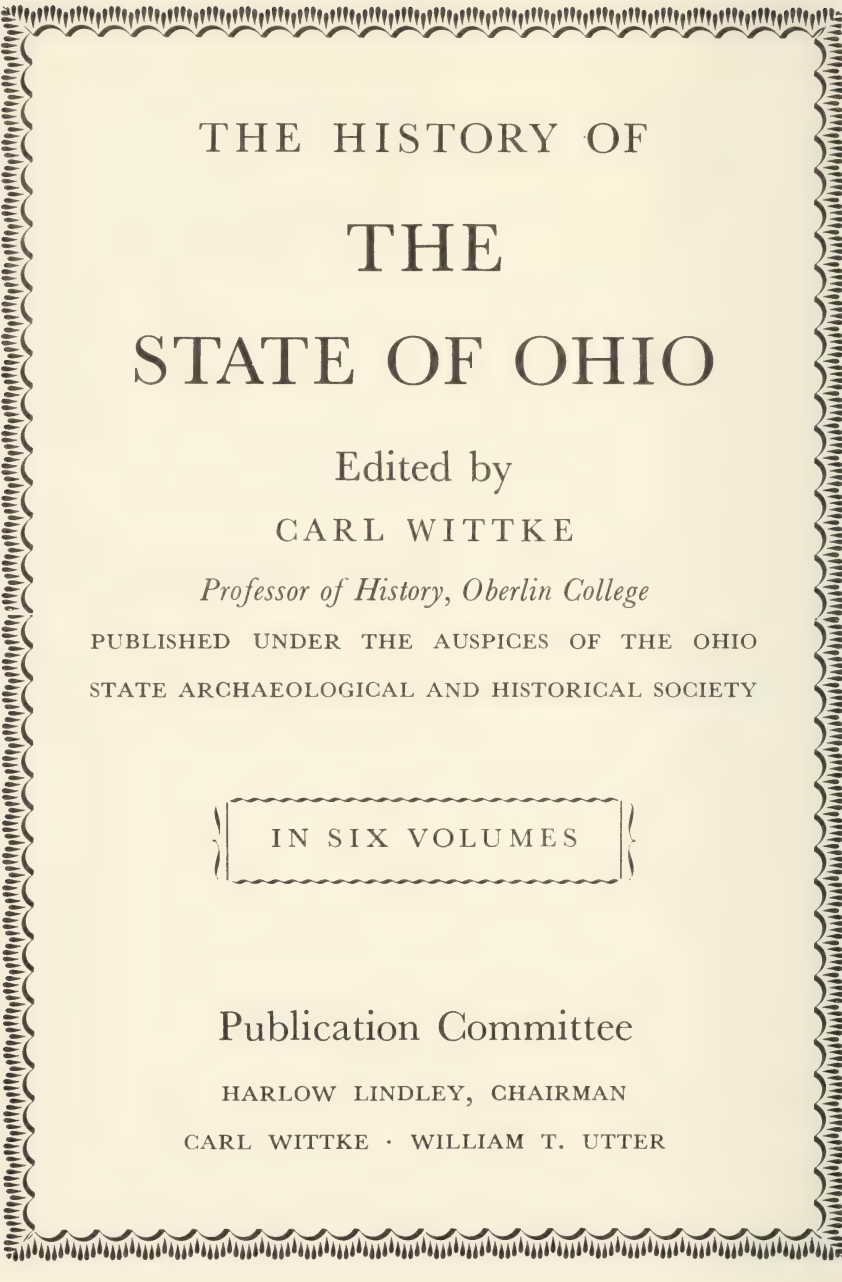
by Francis P. Weisenburger



**A HISTORY
OF THE STATE
OF OHIO
VOLUME III**

THE OHIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

THE HISTORY OF
THE STATE OF OHIO



THE HISTORY OF THE STATE OF OHIO

Edited by
CARL WITTKE

Professor of History, Oberlin College

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VOLUME III

THE PASSING OF
THE FRONTIER

1825-1850

By
FRANCIS P. WEISENBURGER

*Associate Professor of History, Ohio State
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Ohio State Archaeological
and Historical Society

Columbus, Ohio, 1941

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Illinois Historical Survey

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Editor's Introduction to Volume III

THE year 1825 marked the last killing of a white settler by an Indian in Ohio. Twenty-six years later, the last county was created, and the original constitution of the commonwealth was discarded for a new instrument of government which, with many amendments, still provides the political machinery for the State of Ohio. These years from 1825 to 1850 cover one of the most important periods of Ohio history, for it was during this quarter century that the State passed through the last stages of its frontier development.

Professor Weisenburger's familiarity with the period, because of his earlier publications in the field of Ohio history and Jacksonian politics, and his biographies of Charles Hammond and John McLean, made him the logical choice for the preparation of this volume. He has executed his task with a broad conception of what history should include, and he has culled new details from many important manuscript sources.

This volume gives ample space to the party battles of the Jacksonian era, as they were fought in and out of the State legislature, and in local, State and national campaigns. The issues included the tariff, banking, currency, internal improvements, the public lands, and the panic of 1837. Such episodes as the Antimasonic crusade, the Ohio-Michigan boundary controversy, and the frontier difficulties with Canada were strange but politically significant interludes in the political battles of State and national leaders during the years from 1825 to 1850. Toward the latter half of the period, the Whigs rose to power, and Ohio played no small part in the famous log cabin campaign of 1840, and the crisis over Texas and Oregon. Rising antagonisms between North and South, greatly accentuated after the Mexican War, mark the period, and deeply

affected Ohio, whose population had been drawn from both sections of the Union. These more or less familiar episodes Professor Weisenburger has discussed with special reference to the history of the State, but always in proper focus with developments in the Nation as a whole.

Perhaps of greater importance is the author's emphasis upon the social history of this quarter century. He has described the life of the people, their trade and business activities, the rise of industry to supplant the domestic handicrafts of frontier days, methods of agriculture and modes of transportation, from flatboat to turnpike, canal and railroad. He has brought together much new material on the social life of the people, their recreations, amusements, theaters, art, literature, journalism and science, and their efforts to stabilize a rapidly changing frontier community by means of schools, colleges and organized religion. Finally, this volume deals also with a period in the life of the American people when some men and women dreamed generous dreams of the ultimate destiny of the human race and devoted themselves, with enthusiasm and self-sacrifice, to all sorts of "causes," from temperance, home missions, and prison reform to abolitionism.

CARL WITTKE

OBERLIN COLLEGE.

Preface

IN LOOKING backward approximately a century to the period from 1825 to 1850, the author has found his research in the Ohio history of those years an especially gratifying experience. There has been no feeling of being engaged in the preparation of a story that has been retold many times, for never before has a detailed account been presented of the various phases of life during that quarter century in the oldest State of the Old Northwest. Sources of information for the period, moreover, have proved to be more than ample. The State had reached such a degree of maturity that newspapers were being issued in all the chief cities and towns, and these have permitted the author to obtain day-by-day impressions of the common life and of the reactions of the people to social and political phenomena. Moreover, the relatively unhurried life of Ohioans before 1850 permitted much letter-writing, and fortunately voluminous collections of such correspondence have been preserved. Likewise, the degree of leisure attained by large numbers of Ohioans during the period and the succeeding decades stimulated many of them to leave extensive memoirs relating to the years covered by this study. In consulting these various sources the present author has benefited by the ever courteous and helpful attentions of the librarians and their assistants at the Ohio State Library, the Ohio State University Library, the Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society Library (all in Columbus), the Library of the Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio in Cincinnati, the Western Reserve Historical Society Library in Cleveland, the New York Public Library in New York City, and the Library of Congress in Washington. Those readers who may be interested in the various manuscript collections which have been used can find references to them in the foot-notes to the various chapters.

In recent years numerous candidates for the master's and doc-

tor's degrees at the Ohio State University, including many of the author's students, have made careful investigations of various phases of Ohio history. The theses and dissertations resulting from such research in general remain unpublished but have proved invaluable in the study of the period. Numerous published monographs and articles in the various historical journals, especially the *American Historical Review*, the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* and the *Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Quarterly*, have been of great assistance. To such authors credit has been given in the foot-note citations in the various chapters.

It is hardly possible to give personal acknowledgment to all those to whom the author is indebted for friendly assistance of many kinds, but a few persons must be mentioned: Dean Carl Wittke of Oberlin College, general editor of the series, for much stimulating encouragement and for a painstaking reading of the entire manuscript; Professor Eugene H. Roseboom, of the Ohio State University, for many helpful suggestions; Professor Frank J. Roos, Jr., of the Fine Arts Department, the Ohio State University, for the use of numerous photographs from his unrivaled personal collection relating to early Ohio architecture; William R. Willison of Marietta, Ohio, for the intelligence and artistry with which he executed the maps prepared for this volume; Dr. Harlow Lindley, Dr. William D. Overman, K. William McKinley, and Clarence L. Weaver of the Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society, for courtesies over a period of many years; the author's sister, Mrs. Wayne J. Blue of Arlington, Virginia, for generous hospitalities extended during periods of protracted research in Washington, D. C.; and the author's wife, Helen Carter Weisenburger, and his daughter, Elizabeth Ann, for those countless, unremembered expressions of encouragement without which this volume could scarcely have been written.

FRANCIS PHELPS WEISENBURGER

COLUMBUS, November 1, 1940.

THE PASSING OF THE
FRONTIER



1. CINCINNATI IN 1841

From Charles Gist, *Cincinnati in 1841* (Cincinnati, 1841), frontispiece.

CHAPTER I

The Ohio Scene 1825 to 1850

DURING the quarter century from 1825 to 1850, Ohio passed through the later stages of its pioneer period. By the latter year it had become—in the main—a settled commonwealth. By 1851 the last new county had been created. In the same year the original State Constitution of 1802 was discarded for a second, which, with many amendments, has served the State to the present time. That Ohio was reaching a stage of maturity was indicated by the fact that even then old settlers were looking back with some degree of nostalgia to the earlier and simpler days of a few decades before. In the summer of 1850, Joshua Reed Giddings of Ashtabula County, long a congressman from the district in that vicinity, wrote to his son that he liked to “look back upon the early settlement of our county and talk over the incidents of that period when those western forests knew but few civilized inhabitants, when there were five Indians to one white person, when a *clearing* was only to be met once in many miles, when the arrival of a new settler was regarded as an era in the history of a neighborhood: and a spirit of kindness, hospitality, and friendship greeted me at the door of every log cabin to which I demanded admittance.”¹

During the forty-five years since Giddings had come to Ohio (1805) as a small boy of ten years, the State had indeed been wonderfully transformed. By the Census of 1850, it had attained a population of almost two million people (1,980,329). This was in striking contrast to the approximately 42,000 who were numbered in what is now Ohio in 1800. Much of the increase in population and much of the change in the outward appearance of the State, had, of course, occurred before 1825. Indeed, two Cincinnati writ-

¹ Joshua R. Giddings to his son, Washington, D. C., June 16, 1850, Giddings MSS. (in Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society Library, Columbus).

ers, noting the development of the State from 1800 to 1826, had exclaimed, "This increase in a single state, . . . [from about 42,000] to 800,000 in 26 years, is perhaps without a parallel in the history of this or any other country."² During the next quarter of a century, however, the remarkable growth continued, although not in the same proportion. In the decade 1820-1830, Ohio advanced numerically from fifth to fourth place among the states of the Union, having surpassed North Carolina. By 1840, it had 1,519,467 residents and ranked third. Having displaced the Old Dominion state, Virginia, it maintained this position until 1880, when the rapid growth of Chicago enabled Illinois to force Ohio back into fourth place among the most populous states of the Union.³

Already by 1825, a large proportion of the Indians who had earlier inhabited the State had moved farther west. In that year the last white settler to be killed by an Indian in Ohio met his death in the northern part of the State. During the next two decades, the rest of the tribesmen were removed to the West, leaving only a few score behind.⁴

During the period from 1825 to 1850 Ohio was predominantly a farming State. The typical Ohioan lived in the country in the midst of much unimproved land. By the end of the period the better lands, except in the northwestern corner, had been generally brought under cultivation. Extensive woodlands, nevertheless, were still to be found in most sections of the State. At the opening of the period, numerous towns and villages had been incorporated, but Cincinnati alone had a city government. The towns were generally governed by a mayor (or president) and a council. Cincinnati under its charter, granted in 1819, had also three aldermen, who, with the mayor, served as a city court. Columbus was the

² Benjamin Drake and E. D. Mansfield, *Cincinnati in 1826* (Cincinnati, 1826), 19. The Census of 1800 gave the population of the Northwest Territory, including part of Michigan as 45,365. Wayne County, Michigan Territory, had 3,206 inhabitants, leaving 42,159 in what is now Ohio.

³ U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Thirteenth Census of the U. S., 1910* (Washington, 1913), I: *Population*, 30-1.

⁴ W. K. Moorehead, "Indian Tribes of Ohio," *Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Quarterly* (Columbus), VII (1899), 108. Hereafter this periodical is cited *O.S.A.H. Quar.*



MAP 1. OHIO IN 1825

Based upon a map by F. Lucas, engraved by J. V. N. Throop (1825); drawn, with corrections, by William R. Willison for this volume.

second place to be incorporated as a city (1834), with a municipal organization different from that of Cincinnati. Numerous other city charters were granted thereafter.⁵

⁵ Kenneth S. Kantzer, "The Municipal Legislation in Ohio to 1851," M. A. thesis, Ohio State University, 1939, 34ff.

In 1825, the following forest trees were common in Ohio: black walnut; white flowering and honey locust; white, black and lowland chestnut; burr oak; wild cherry; yellow poplar; blue and white ash; mulberry; shellbark hickory; coffee nut; beech; sweet buckeye; sassafras; sugar tree; red maple; linden; and box-elder. Many of these, like the sycamore, grew to great size. Numerous shrubs were also to be found, including the blackberry and the sumach, and travelers were fascinated by the wild grapes and by the sickeningly sweet fruit of the pawpaw, "a bushy elegant shrub with large leaves."⁶

In the decade before 1825, wolves had been numerous and bold along the western shores of Lake Erie near Sandusky, and occasionally bears had been encountered in isolated areas. In 1826, the bounty given by the State for wolves killed in Williams County (which was then larger than at present) more than equaled the whole State tax paid in that county. By 1840, the larger wild animals had almost completely disappeared, but the opossum, raccoon, fox, polecat, mink, squirrel, ground-hog, and rabbit were still found within the borders of the State. The beaver which had once been abundant had completely vanished, and only a few otter remained. Wild turkeys were found in large numbers, and as late as 1843 numbers of deer were living in the Maumee Valley.⁷

This northwestern corner of Ohio was the last part of the State to be settled by any considerable number of people. West of the Sandusky River to the Maumee was the Black Swamp, a marshy area about forty miles in width and one hundred and twenty miles in length. By a treaty made with the Indians at Brownstown in 1808, the Federal Government had secured a strip of land to provide for a road through the swamp. Only a preliminary survey, however, had been made, hence the highway route was transferred to the State, and a road was definitely built in 1827. Previous to this the land from Lower Sandusky (Fremont) to the Maumee

⁶ R. G. Thwaites, ed., *Early Western Travels, 1718-1846* (Cleveland, 1904-07), IX, 121; XII, 208; Drake and Mansfield, *Cincinnati*, 9-10.

⁷ *Ibid.*, VIII, 196; J. S. Buckingham, *Eastern and Western States of America* (London, 1842), II, 333.

was an unconquered wilderness "through which there was no road, except a mere trail through the woods."⁸ Even later, it was dangerous to cross the swamp except via the above-mentioned road.

In the spring of 1841, a prospective settler, David Hockman, who planned to locate in the present Henry County, endeavored to reach his destination by a short cut northward through the swamp. He reached the present Ottawa in Putnam County and proceeded to traverse the eighteen miles of marsh land. Even in dry weather the country was low and wet, but in the spring it was considered impassable. For two days Hockman moved through the gloomy pathless woods, following the course that the water seemed to follow. His team pulled a lightly loaded wagon through water varying in depth from two to twelve or more inches. At the end of the second day, provisions were running low and Hockman's stepsister who accompanied him was almost distracted with fear. At midnight, however, two pioneer settlers who had noticed the wagon tracks offered aid and enabled them to reach their destination through the valley of a flooded creek which in places was waist deep with water.⁹

Such an area was extremely unhealthful, and agues and fevers were prevalent. Mosquitoes thrived and proved almost as bothersome as disease itself. Thus, horses had to be kept blanketed with their heads wrapped with cloths during the summer season in spite of the heat. The pioneers themselves wore heavy clothing with their faces covered and their hands protected by buckskin mittens. Hence, as late as 1830, thousands turned to the north and west of this region—into Michigan and Indiana—to seek a more favorable climate, and only scattered settlements were found in the whole Maumee Valley.

In 1830, Toledo was yet unborn, though the settlements at Maumee and Perrysburg a few miles up the river were havens of

⁸ Thwaites, ed., *Western Travels*, VIII, 196 and note; H. S. Knapp, *History of the Maumee Valley* (Toledo, 1872), 292-3.

⁹ David Hockman, "Reminiscences," *Maumee Valley Pioneer* (Grand Rapids, Ohio), I (1890), 2-8.

rest for the weary traveler and centers of such commerce as had developed in the valley. A few white settlers had located in the Maumee country prior to 1820, for the most part stragglers who remained after the conclusion of the War of 1812 or of a land survey. Scattered families settled at various places along the river during the 1820's, but in 1830 most of the region was yet a wilderness. As late as 1834 one might go directly northward from the vicinity of Defiance and not encounter a single family within the borders of Ohio.¹⁰

In 1832 plans got under way for the development of the present site of Toledo. An attempt to build a town there in 1816 had failed. Two enterprises were begun at the later date, one named Vistula, at the mouth of the Maumee and another, known as Port Lawrence, farther up the river. By June, 1832, Vistula had been laid out, a few board shanties had been erected, and the grading had been done for a wharf; the first store was soon erected, and by 1834 a speculative boom in lots was under way. By 1835 and 1836 the whole valley was filled with enterprising fortune-hunters from the East "and the shores of the river from Fort Wayne to the Maumee Bay were alive with city-builders."¹¹ The *Cincinnati Gazette* in June, 1837, carried an advertisement for the sale of four hundred village lots in Defiance, the promoters declaring, "Indeed few, if any, places in the western, or even in the eastern states, have so high a reputation for beauty, pleasantness and healthfulness; and, when viewed in reference to its commercial advantages, its future importance becomes obvious."¹²

But, by that time Jackson's Specie Circular had been issued, and the panic of 1837 ruined the hopes of speculators. The village of Toledo had been incorporated in 1836. During the next year, Giddings, stopping there on legal business, found much evidence of the crudity of a new community, and business "very dull and money extremely scarce" with improvements of all kinds "at a

¹⁰ Edwin Phelps, "Reminiscences," *Defiance (Ohio) Express*, June 2, 1887.

¹¹ J. W. Scott, "Memoirs," Knapp, *Maumee Valley*, 542.

¹² June 22, 1837.

standstill." From his room in the Toledo House he wrote, "It is now Sabbath and nearly time for meeting. But it appears little like home. No meeting house, no preaching, steam-boats coming and going. Railroad cars moving, a bustle of business about the bar room immediately below me, in short there is none of that sweet retired silence that throws around the Sabbath a loveliness and sanctity so grateful to the Christian feelings."¹³

By 1840, with 1,112 inhabitants the new port town had surpassed in size the neighboring communities of Maumee and Perrysburg, the latter at that time the county-seat of Wood County.

Farther to the east, Sandusky City (on Sandusky Bay) was an important commercial center. Originally laid out in 1817 as Portland, as late as 1831 it was often called by that name.¹⁴ In 1830, it had about six hundred people and was the center of considerable ship-building. By 1850, with over five thousand inhabitants it was considerably larger than Toledo which had 3,829. The prevailing rock of the area was limestone. The blue variety found there, excellent for building purposes, was already being utilized for the more important local buildings, and for shipment elsewhere. Other natural deposits of commercial value in the vicinity were gypsum and strontian.¹⁵ Before the completion of the Ohio Canal, and to some extent thereafter, Sandusky was a popular port for those using Lake Erie in going to and from the lower Ohio and Mississippi valleys. One such traveler, disembarking at Sandusky in 1830, proceeded southward via McCutchenville, then a place of half a dozen families. The relative recency of the settlement of the region is indicated by the description committed to his journal: "Up to this time the forests presented little variety beyond the log cabins and clearings of the settlers—occasionally good frame houses, the fields well fenced and bearing heavy crops of Indian corn, wheat and rye, but the gaunt, naked skeletons of girdled trees, often scathed with fire and standing in vast numbers among

¹³ Giddings to his wife, Apr. 22-23, 1837, Giddings MSS.

¹⁴ John Kilbourn, *Ohio Gazetteer* (Columbus, 1831), 260.

¹⁵ Drake and Mansfield, *Cincinnati*, 11-2.

the growing grain gave an air of bleakness and desolation to the farm lands." Still farther to the south he encountered the Wyandot Indian reservation at Upper Sandusky.¹⁶

Sandusky is located near the western end of the Western Reserve (including the Firelands). Many early settlers of the Firelands (the present Erie and Huron counties) both before and after 1825 were from Connecticut and must have found a pleasant memory of their earlier homes in the names of such communities as Norwalk, Greenwich, New Haven, and New London. Incidentally, even after 1825 wild turkeys were so numerous in this neighborhood as to present a problem resulting from their consuming the seed sown by pioneer farmers.

Milan, in Huron County, during the period from 1825 to 1850, not only gave birth to the immortal Thomas A. Edison, but was a commercial center of considerable importance. Only a few miles from Lake Erie and the trading center of a large grain-producing area, with the completion of a ship-canal to the Lake (in 1839), it became a large ship-building community and the point of shipment for an extensive trade in grain.¹⁷

The whole northeastern part of the State north from the forty-first parallel to the Lake comprised the Western Reserve, set aside by Connecticut for educational purposes when she surrendered her lands in the West to the Federal Government. New England contributed a major portion of the population of this area before 1850 and profoundly influenced its traditions. On the Reserve, in dozens of communities a "common" with white belfried church near-by gave a distinct New England atmosphere to the place. The homes, moreover, were in large degree of a type which would easily have fitted into the landscape of almost any Connecticut or Massachusetts town. Several villages, somewhat specialized in their intellectual opportunities, such as Oberlin and Hudson, became in reality western prototypes of the New England college community.

¹⁶ Thomas Kelah Wharton, "Journal," July 13, 1830, MS. (in New York Public Library).

¹⁷ F. W. Fowler, "Further Reminiscences of Milan Township," *Firelands Pioneer* (Norwalk, Ohio), II (1860), 12-6.

Industrial life on the Reserve was then relatively unimportant, the region being best known as excellent dairy country. As late as 1850, no town on the Reserve, except Cleveland, had as many as 3,500 inhabitants; and such an industrial community as Lorain later proved to be was not even mentioned in the census reports until 1880.¹⁸

Even Cleveland was, as late as 1830, a small village of scarcely a thousand inhabitants, in marked contrast to the twenty-five thousand who then comprised the population of Cincinnati. The Forest City—as Cleveland later came to be called—nevertheless was then on the verge of a fairly rapid, if not spectacular growth. The completion of the Ohio Canal—from Cleveland to Portsmouth—in 1832 was a great boon to the community. Travelers preferred the canal boats to the slow and uncomfortable stage-coaches. Such newcomers to America as Gustave Koerner, who was destined to become a leader of the German-speaking people in Illinois, came in 1833 from Germany to New York, and via the Erie Canal and Lake Erie continued to the West, stopping at Cleveland to take passage on the Ohio Canal. Koerner found Cleveland “then a small place,” in striking contrast to the large and beautiful city he was to visit in later years.¹⁹

But, even then an increasing commercial activity was indicated by the additional shops, canal-boats, and lake steamers in the Cleveland area. One traveler in 1834 commented that it was “full of life, trade, and business,”²⁰ and at the same time more pretentious dwellings and churches began to rise in the town. During the decade from 1830 to 1840 the population increased to over six thousand inhabitants. In the same year in which Cleveland was incorporated (1836) the present West Side (across the Cuyahoga River) of that city, known as Brooklyn village, or Ohio City, was also incorporated. In 1841, it was reported: “This town [Ohio City] has, perhaps, grown more rapidly for a few years past, than

¹⁸ *Thirteenth Census*, I, 86.

¹⁹ Gustave Koerner, *Memoirs*, ed. by T. J. McCormack (Cedar Rapids, Ia., 1909), I, 280.

²⁰ Thwaites, ed., *Western Travels*, XXIV, 160.



2. CLEVELAND IN 1833

St. Clair Street, looking east and showing the Court-house, Old Stone Church, Trinity Episcopal Church, and the Academy. From Charles Whittlesey, *Early History of Cleveland* (Cleveland, 1867).

any other in the state; and great enterprise has exhibited itself by the grading of streets, and numerous other public and private improvements. Many elegant mansions, and extensive blocks of warehouses, stores, shops, etc., etc., have been recently erected. . . . It bids fair to outstrip its older and richer sister and rival, if not in amount of business, yet certainly in enterprise and present improvements. It has a printing office, numerous stores, taverns, shops, warehouses.”²¹

But Cleveland itself was developing, and one traveler in 1843 described it as “a splendid city” with “surpassingly elegant” country seats above and below on the lake road.²² By 1850 Cleveland had over 17,000 people (not including those in the much smaller Ohio City which was annexed in 1854). It was still primarily a commercial rather than an industrial city.

²¹ Warren Jenkins, *Ohio Gazetteer* (Columbus, 1841), 342-3.

²² J. L. Scott, *Journal of a Missionary Tour* (Providence, 1843), 15.

Elsewhere throughout the Western Reserve agricultural and commercial interests still dominated the economic life, though beginnings were being made in the development of mill and factory. A town, characteristic of the primary concerns of the region, was the flourishing county-seat of Lake County, Painesville, thirty miles or more east of Cleveland. Henry Howe, who visited it in 1846, reported: "Painesville is one of the most beautiful villages in the west: it is somewhat scattered, leaving ample room for the cultivation of gardens, ornamental trees and shrubbery. A handsome public square of several acres, adorned with young trees, is laid out near the center of the town, on which face some public buildings and private mansions."²³

Painesville owed its importance to its location in the midst of a rich agricultural area and on the main post-road from Buffalo to Detroit. Two miles north on the Lake, one came to Fairport Harbor, considered by some "the finest and most spacious harbor on the south shore of Lake Erie, constructed by the United States." This was "a regular place of landing and embarkation for passengers between the western country and the state of New York." Already in 1841, near Painesville was located the Geauga furnace which represented a considerable investment for that period in iron manufacturing.²⁴

In 1825, the interior of the Western Reserve was as yet sparsely settled. A traveler who left Cleveland via the Ohio Canal in 1833, wrote that "dense and majestic forests lined the canal on either side, and were interspersed only by occasional clearings for farms and towns."²⁵ The canal, however, helped to accomplish a great development. Akron, located on the Portage Summit of the canal, was laid out in September, 1825. By 1836, it contained about 1,600 people with a large number of retail stores and numerous manufacturing for such products as clocks, looking-glasses, maps, chairs, woolen goods, and carding and shearing machines. Here also were

²³ Henry Howe, *Historical Collections of Ohio* (Cincinnati, 1852), 279.

²⁴ Jenkins, *Ohio Gazetteer*, 348, 178.

²⁵ Koerner, *Memoirs*, I, 280.

located two large blast-furnaces, an extensive flour-mill, a distillery, two sawmills, six warehouses, a dry dock, a printing office, and five taverns.²⁶ By 1850, the first significant stirrings of the later great industrial development of the region were being felt as coal was beginning to be mined in the Youngstown area and blast-furnaces for the reduction of iron ore were being erected.

Like Akron to the north, Massillon in Stark County owed its development to the coming of the Ohio Canal. Laid out in March, 1826, with an earlier cross-roads settlement as the nucleus, it soon became an important shipping center and by 1841 contained 1,500 to 2,000 inhabitants. It was one of the principal wheat markets of the State, the main street at times being clogged with wagons loaded with the harvest of many farms. During 1836, about 287,000 bushels of wheat were shipped from the place. Coal and iron ore were found near at hand, hence foundries and machine shops were established; by 1836, considerable quantities of pig iron, castings, and ore were being produced for export.

Canton, eight miles away, was an older and larger settlement, dating back to 1806. Already in 1830 it contained 1,257 people and by 1850 it had 2,603 inhabitants. It was notable for its large number of brick dwellings, and by 1850 it had developed a large trade in wheat and flour and a large interest in the manufacture of iron, flour, and woolen goods.

Mansfield in Richland County was indeed in the center of excellent farming country as was Mount Vernon, the county-seat of Knox County to the south. The Congregational Church in Mansfield was one of the finest edifices in the State, as was the Episcopal Church—a Gothic structure—in Mount Vernon. Both of these towns were on the road which led from the National Road via Newark to the Lake, and travelers often commented that Mount Vernon's buildings, both public and private, were "much superior, in point of taste, elegance and durability" to those of most western towns.²⁷

²⁶ Jenkins, *Ohio Gazetteer*, 55.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 280, 317.

In Jefferson County, on the Ohio River, Steubenville in 1830 was slightly larger than Dayton and third—next to Cincinnati and Zanesville—among the towns of Ohio in population. It then had about three thousand people. A traveler arriving at the town by steamboat in 1840 gave this description of the place: "It rises steadily from the right, or northern bank of the Ohio, having its principal street ascending upwards to the hills, at right angles with the river. This is nearly a mile long, and about 80 feet broad, well paved, with side walks, and having a number of good stores and dwellings. Several smaller streets run parallel to this on each side, and the whole are intersected by lateral streets crossing them at right angles, preserving the usual symmetry of American towns."²⁸

As early as 1812 a woolen manufactory had been established in Steubenville which developed into an important center of this industry. By 1828 the most important woolen factory there was using 38,000 pounds of wool annually.²⁹ In 1840 there were upwards of thirty steam engines in operation in the community. The making of fine stage-coaches and carriages was an important enterprise, and by the late 'forties seven copperas factories were located in the vicinity. Steubenville had a considerable reputation as the seat of excellent academies, catering separately to young men and young women. The town had a steady growth, but not comparable with that of some other Ohio communities. In 1850, with 6,140 people it ranked sixth among the cities of the State.

If one took a river boat from Steubenville down the Ohio, after some miles one came to Wheeling opposite the shore of the Buckeye State. Here a ferry on the National Road carried passengers and coaches across the river. An English traveler journeying westward along the road in 1840 was surprised at the large proportion of cleared land, "though the clearings were evidently recent, as the stumps of the trees that had been felled were yet remaining in the soil." He greatly admired the high, healthful, and commanding location of St. Clairsville and the succession of hills and valleys

²⁸ Buckingham, *Eastern and Western States*, II, 240.

²⁹ Columbus *Ohio State Journal*, Sept. 25, 1828; Cincinnati *Gazette*, Nov. 18, 1829

in the vicinity which gave a note of grandeur to the countryside.³⁰ On the hills, especially to the north of the National Road, countless sheep grazed. The region northward to the Western Reserve was one of the great wool-producing areas of the United States. As the traveler mentioned above journeyed through St. Clairsville, Fairview, Old Washington, and Cambridge, he noted a greater degree of neatness and cleanliness than he had observed in any towns of similar size in the country, and the flowering shrubs in front of the dwellings and the neat appearance of the populace he regarded as especially worthy of mention.

About seventy-five miles west of Wheeling was Zanesville where the Licking River enters the Muskingum. The latter river was then considered navigable for "large batteaux" as far as Coshocton (some miles above Zanesville), though at Zanesville some impediments to navigation in the form of waterfalls existed. These, however, had been utilized for water-power, and Zanesville had early become an important manufacturing center. In 1830, with over three thousand inhabitants, it was the second largest city in the State. By the middle of the century, with about eight thousand people, it ranked fifth. At that time there was already a Y bridge over the Muskingum the road forking in the middle of the stream and eliciting considerable comment from travelers.³¹

Down the Muskingum Valley, at its mouth was Marietta, Ohio's oldest community. For some years before 1825 it had presented to travelers "a deserted aspect" and seemed to be "rapidly declining" in importance, its population possessing "little energy and less property, to add beauty or grandeur to the place."³² In 1830, it had about 1,200 inhabitants and was then slightly larger than Cleveland. Its stately trees, as the years went by, made it a beautiful settlement, and as mercantile enterprises prospered and ship-building was revived, substantial comfort was attained by many of its inhabitants. Marietta College was chartered in 1835. By

³⁰ Buckingham, *Eastern and Western States*, II, 267, 268.

³¹ Howe, *Historical Collections*, 389.

³² Thwaites, ed., *Western Travels*, VIII, 264; XIX, 34.

1850 the town (excluding Harmar across the river) had about three thousand inhabitants. Howe, who visited the community in 1846, wrote: "Many of the dwellings are constructed with great neatness and embellished with handsome door-yards and highly cultivated gardens. Its inhabitants are mostly of New England descent, and there are few places in our country that can compare with this in point of morality and intelligence—but few of its size that have so many cultivated and literary men."³³

Some distance down the Ohio River from Marietta lay Portsmouth, which had about a thousand people in 1830. Four years later a traveler described it as "rather an inconsiderable town, with low houses, and broad, unpaved streets."³⁴ Its location, however, on the Ohio River, at the end of the fertile Scioto Valley to the north and at the southern terminus of the Ohio Canal, gave it great commercial advantages. Prosperity came and with it perhaps a greater appreciation of the natural beauty of the place. In 1840 one traveler noted that "the steep and richly wooded hills of Kentucky, rising abruptly on the opposite side of the Ohio, to the south of the town, and the beautiful view of the descending river westward, make a picture of surpassing beauty."³⁵

Already by that time a source of prosperity for this general region was the utilization of the iron deposits near-by, through the erection of charcoal furnaces, at a period when the richer iron resources of the Lake Superior region were largely unexploited. North and east of the Ohio iron region (called the Hanging Rock area) the Hocking Valley coal fields began to be utilized commercially after 1835.

Directly north of Portsmouth was the fertile Scioto Valley, whose soil was "as rich as that on the banks of the Nile, and like it, a fat black loam of considerable depth." In the valley to the northward, Chillicothe, Circleville, and Columbus were important centers of local trade. As late as 1840, however, the roads in the vicinity

³³ Howe, *Historical Collections*, 512.

³⁴ Thwaites, ed., *Western Travels*, XXIV, 146.

³⁵ Buckingham, *Eastern and Western States*, II, 345-6.

were extremely poor, even the stage road between Columbus and Portsmouth being "actually impassable" in very rainy weather. In such cases the canal became the sole means of transportation, though passengers were not always certain of a reliable time schedule. Sometimes the canal itself failed to function, as on one occasion in 1833, when the travelers found that the wooden aqueduct which carried the canal over the Scioto at Circleville had literally fallen into that river, making the canal impassable for about twenty miles due to a dearth of water. In such cases a wagon on the highway had to be employed to meet the emergency.³⁶

Travelers through Ohio during these years found taverns with varying accommodations available every few miles. Simple meals could generally be obtained on the first floor, with numerous rooms on the second filled with beds, sometimes equipped with a feather bed and a single sheet. When business was heavy, a bed might have to be shared with two or three strangers. Perhaps the use of water might be prohibited on the second floor lest damage result to the furniture below. In such cases a tub by the pump in the yard was available for the morning shave.³⁷ Better accommodations were found, of course, in the hotels of the towns and cities.

West of the Scioto and extending to the Little Miami River was the Virginia Military Tract, peopled largely by Virginians and Kentuckians. Nearly level in many places and covered with high grass or spacious forests in early pioneer days, much of the region had fallen into the hands of speculators who reaped a considerable profit from the venture.

Sometimes pioneers disliked too many neighbors and with the advance of close settlement would move on farther west. Thus, a traveler in 1834 stopped at the home of a prosperous farmer west of Chillicothe, who had settled on the farm about 1814. The farmer had paid three dollars an acre for his land, but was ready to sell out

³⁶ Koerner, *Memoirs*, I, 280.

³⁷ E. S. Abdy, *Journal of a Residence and Tour in the United States of North America* (London, 1835), III, 82.



3. HOME AT CHILLICOTHE ERECTED IN 1840
An example of the Classical Revival. Courtesy of Frank J. Roos, Jr.

and move farther west, expecting to receive ten to fifteen dollars per acre for the land, about two-thirds of which was woodland.³⁸

Chillicothe—like Hillsboro and other towns in the Military District—retained much of the southern atmosphere introduced by its Kentucky and Virginia founders. In 1830, it boasted of almost three thousand inhabitants, though for more than a decade the western pull of population had caused some of its homes to be deserted for attractions in more remote regions. Koerner, stopping there in 1833, considered it “really a very handsome town,” and it contained a number of homes of really distinguished architecture.³⁹ Two miles away was Adena, home of the Worthington family, “constructed in the style of an Italian villa, of free stone, with stone steps on the exterior.” On one side was a terrace with flowers and a vegetable garden, arranged and cultivated by German gardeners.⁴⁰

In 1840, Chillicothe contained 3,977 people, of whom about one-tenth were colored; ten years later 7,100 persons inhabited the place. One traveler in 1840 commented that one hostess there “was one of the most truly accomplished in mind, and ladylike in manners, that we had yet seen west of the Alleghenies, and would have been an ornament to any sphere in Europe; while the gentlemen were much above the ordinary standard of male society in America.”⁴¹

The Scioto Valley was an important corn-producing and cattle-raising area; but visitors were often more interested in the numerous mounds left there by prehistoric people. Some, like those at Chillicothe, were being destroyed as early as the 1830's by the enterprising cultivator of the soil.

Farther north than Chillicothe, Circleville—named for the particular form of Mound-builder remains found there—had developed into a prosperous market town, but one visitor in 1826

³⁸ *Ibid.*, III, 82-3.

³⁹ Koerner, *Memoirs*, I, 282.

⁴⁰ Thwaites, ed., *Western Travels*, XI, 179; Karl Bernhard, Duke of Saxe-Weimar, *Travels through North America during the Years 1825 and 1826* (Philadelphia, 1828), II, 149-50.

⁴¹ Buckingham, *Eastern and Western States*, II, 367.

noted that the homes there, in contrast to those in some neighboring places, were largely of wood.⁴² Still farther north, at the junction of the Olentangy (Whetstone) with the Scioto River, Columbus, then—as now—the State capital, was a relatively young city, having been laid out in 1812 (though it was destined to absorb Franklinton, a mile away, founded in 1797).

One visitor to Columbus in 1826 found “nothing remarkable in the public buildings.”⁴³ Another, in 1832, gave the following description of High (the principal business) Street: “The sidewalks are broad, paved with brick, and present quite a busy scene, and the middle of the street is kept in a state of constant and lively animation by an endless train of wagons, horses and horsemen—long-springed, four-horse stages rattling through at intervals—and a great variety of travelling and pleasure taking vehicles. Casting the eye along the line of buildings to the right a large Hotel [site of the present Neil House] and 2 Blocks of handsome, well built stores (of three stories) form the principal features. The intermediate houses, too, good and all of brick—many of them with arcades of wood in front shading the sidewalks.”⁴⁴

Charles Dickens wrote in 1842 that the town was “clean and pretty.”⁴⁵ It was more important as a market town for the fertile region in the vicinity and as a center of State administration than as an industrial community, for early efforts at manufacturing in Columbus had been far from encouraging. Numerous establishments, nevertheless, some of them short-lived, were founded during the period, with varying degrees of success.

The original State buildings (on the State-house Square) that had been erected shortly after the founding of the town, had become outmoded, and the pasturing of cattle on the unoccupied portions did not add to the appearance of the capitol grounds during the early 'thirties. In 1840 an Englishman in the city stated

⁴² Bernhard, *Travels*, II, 148.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, II, 147.

⁴⁴ Wharton, “Journal,” Mar. 1, 1832.

⁴⁵ Charles Dickens, *American Notes*, his *Works* (American Library Edition New York, n. d.), XIV, 250.



4. COLUMBUS IN 1846

From Henry Howe, *Historical Collections of Ohio* (Cincinnati, 1848), facing p. 172.

that it might be doubted whether there was a capital "in all the United States so unattractive and undignified" in its public buildings.⁴⁶ Even then efforts were being made to secure the erection of a new State-house, but many years were to pass before such a project was completed. Aside from these buildings on Capitol Square, the penitentiary was to many visitors to Columbus, the most interesting place. In 1825, the original building erected in 1813 and an additional one, constructed in 1818, were still in use. In 1826 the inmates numbered 142. At that time the convicts were employed in blacksmithing, wagon making, coopering, shoemaking, and in the manufacture of cloth, the products being exchanged for necessities used by the institution. Discipline, however, became lax, and numerous escapes occurred. Overcrowding resulted in a demand for a new building, and a committee of the legislature investigated the situation. As a result, in February, 1832, the General Assembly authorized the erection of a new penitentiary with housing and working facilities for five hundred convicts. A site was obtained (still in use), construction was begun, and in October,

⁴⁶ A. E. Lee, *History of the City of Columbus* (New York, 1892), II, 315-27; Buckingham, *Eastern and Western States*, II, 302.

1834, the prisoners were transferred to the new location.⁴⁷ A new system of labor was introduced with the opening of the new building. Manufactured articles were no longer sold in behalf of the State, but the labor of the convicts was hired out to contractors. By 1850, a definite opposition to the contract system had led to its partial abandonment. The workshops were located in the great central court, inspectors being stationed at various places and supervisors being in charge of even the smallest groups. Under the Auburn, or "silent," system convicts were prohibited from communicating with each other in any way under severe penalty.⁴⁸ Prisoners wore the conventional striped garb. Called from their cells at an early hour they partook of a plain breakfast and then worked until two o'clock. A simple dinner was followed by labor until nightfall, when corn bread only was served for supper. Then the convicts were marched to their cells where the Bible and Prayer Book were the only reading materials provided for them. The lock-step was used, and various severe punishments were applied to unruly inmates. For those who departed from the regulations while at work a special flogging room was provided where large whips were used upon the unfortunate offenders.⁴⁹ In 1840, about one-ninth of the convicts were colored. In the decade prior to 1826, only two women had been incarcerated, but in 1837 a separate department with eleven cells for women was constructed. Only the most degraded women, however, found their way to this institution, where in 1840 there was one white woman, convicted of an atrocious murder, as well as four negro women. Unfortunately there was then no separate institution for juvenile offenders, and sometimes boys of ten to fifteen years were sentenced to his prison.⁵⁰

In Columbus by 1850, there were also State institutions for the insane, the deaf and dumb, and the blind. The city in 1830 had a

⁴⁷ Lee, *History of Columbus*, II, 578-82.

⁴⁸ C. B. Hicks, "History of Penal Institutions in Ohio to 1850," *O.S.A.H. Quar.* XXXIII (1924), 359-426.

⁴⁹ Buckingham, *Eastern and Western States*, II, 305-7.

⁵⁰ Lee, *History of Columbus*, II, 582.

population of 2,435; in 1840, 6,048; and in 1850, 17,882, being then slightly larger than Cleveland and second only to Cincinnati among Ohio cities.

In the capital, Broad Street was a beautiful thoroughfare "well walled in with spacious edifices," but the countryside of central Ohio bore many of the earmarks of a pioneer region. Although the soil was excellent, poor cabins and log huts, with roofs and clapboards which often admitted the rain, were the usual abodes. Excellent timber-land abounded, and easterners were especially impressed by the giant sycamores.

About twenty-five miles north of Columbus in the Olentangy Valley, Delaware was then a small community in the midst of a rich agricultural region which had minor industrial interests. Visitors from a distance came to take advantage of the sulphur springs in this locality, where excellent hotel facilities were available. Local enthusiasts compared the place with the famed sulphur springs of Virginia. Roads through this region were such as to be the common complaint of those who used them. One traveler wrote: "Besides the usual depth of mud, we would occasionally, without warning, dive into a hole of unknown depth, filled with black mud, whose murky consistency effectually concealed the mysteries of the interior—and there stick. This they called being stalled—and on such occasions we were obliged to take a fence rail and help along."⁵¹

In the wilderness of north central Ohio at that time the highways were sometimes infested with robbers, and taverns occasionally were in reality dens of thieves who preyed upon travelers. Near Marion one small village was locally designated as "Sodom."⁵² Marion in 1830 was an unpretentious village of 285 inhabitants. During the next ten years the population doubled, and in 1850, 1,311 people resided there.

Pigs were to be found everywhere along the roadside, for they boarded themselves by foraging in the woods, except in winter

⁵¹ C. P. Bradley, "Journal," *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, XV (1906), 245.

⁵² Scott, *Missionary Tour*, 20-2.

when they were fed on corn.⁵³ Dickens told of a traveler at Upper Sandusky who was so annoyed by the bugs in his bed at the log inn that during the night he fled to the stage-coach outside. But there, "the pigs scenting him, and looking upon the coach as a kind of pie with some manner of meat inside, grunted round it so hideously, that he was afraid to come out again, and lay there shivering till morning."⁵⁴ In the towns these animals were numerous, and fastidious New Englanders complained of the numbers of them that sought the garbage in the yards, over which the bedroom windows of the taverns opened.⁵⁵

About twenty-five miles southwest of Marion was the northern part of the Mad River Valley. In 1842, in traversing this area one journeyed through a forest penetrated by a corduroy road made by throwing the trunks of trees into the marsh and leaving them there to settle.⁵⁶ At length one reached Bellefontaine "in a very romantic country surrounded with an oaken forest." This pretty county-seat town, in Logan County, and Urbana in Champaign County, were trading centers of local importance. Farther south, Springfield, on the National Road, was already attaining some importance as a manufacturing center. One visitor in 1826 was impressed by the fact that nearly all the houses were of brick and that on a Sunday many well-dressed country people rode in carts or on horseback into the city to church.⁵⁷ The town, like many other Ohio communities, stood during the 1830's in the midst of virgin forests. An English Congregational minister who stopped there in 1834 wrote: "Springfield is a flourishing town, built among the handsome hills that abound in this vicinity. It is one of the cleanest, brightest, and most inviting that I have seen. But all the habitations were as nothing compared with the forest. I had been travelling through it for two days and nights [via Marion and Co-

⁵³ W. C. Howells, *Recollections of Life in Ohio from 1813 to 1840* (Cincinnati, 1895), 62.

⁵⁴ Dickens, *American Notes*, 254-5.

⁵⁵ Bradley, "Journal," 225.

⁵⁶ Scott, *Missionary Tour*, 22.

⁵⁷ Bernhard, *Travels*, II, 145.

lumbus], and still it was the same. Now you came to a woodsman's hut in the solitudes; now to a farm; and now to a village, by courtesy called a town or a city; but it was still the forest. You drove on for miles through it unbroken; then you came to a small clearance and a young settlement; and then again you plunged into the wide everlasting forest."⁵⁸

The Mad River near Springfield was especially suited for mills operated by water-power, and during the late 1840's over twenty were to be found within three miles of the city.⁵⁹ Springfield became somewhat of an educational center with the chartering of Wittenberg College in 1845. The town had 1,080 people in 1830; 2,094 in 1840; and 5,108 in 1850.

A few miles south of Springfield, Yellow Springs—soon to be the seat of Antioch College—was a noted pleasure resort with a fine mineral spring. Visitors especially from Cincinnati and the South came there to hunt, fish, and to partake of the spring water for health purposes. Farther in a southwesterly direction, Dayton was in 1840 a town of over six thousand inhabitants. One traveler considered it "one of the prettiest inland towns in the country," for the view of the city "with its white dwellings, tall spires, and pretty gardens, amid the meanderings of the river, and the branching turns of the canal, formed as pretty a picture as could be imagined."⁶⁰ In the city considerable manufacturing was carried on, there being in 1840 (in addition to other establishments) six cotton spinning manufactories, employing about 600 persons, and one weaving mill, capable of producing three thousand yards a day. In the midst of a rich agricultural region it was also an important market center, and a shipping point for the cattle of the vicinity.

East and south of Dayton, the Little Miami Valley, an excellent farming area, supported a number of trading centers such as Xenia and Lebanon. More directly south of Dayton was the beautiful and fertile valley of the Great Miami. In 1840, the river appeared

⁵⁸ Rev. Read, in Howe, *Historical Collections of Ohio* (Norwalk, 1896), II, 197.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* (edition of 1852), 93.

⁶⁰ Buckingham, *Eastern and Western States*, II, 418.

"neither so broad nor so deep" as the Scioto but much more transparent, with bordering hills not so lofty as those in south central Ohio but quite as richly wooded and with bottom lands as fertile as could be imagined.⁶¹

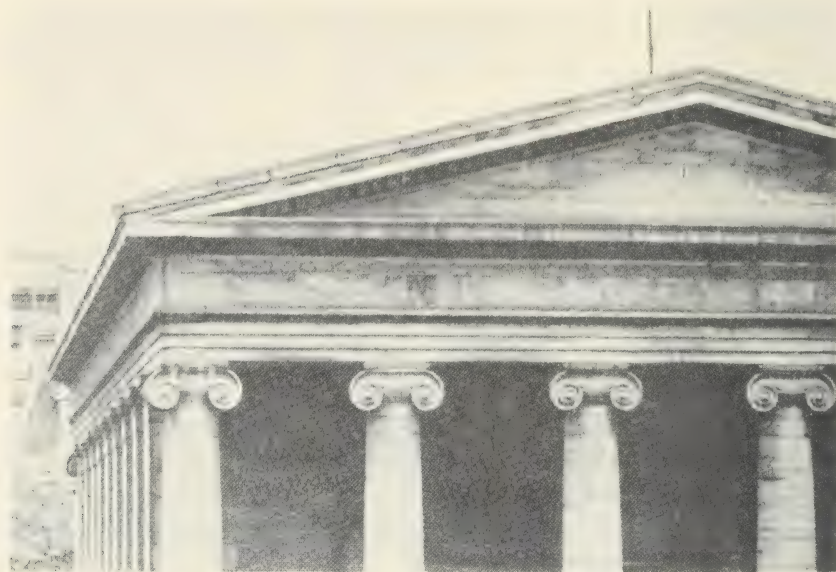
About twenty miles below Dayton, Middletown, on the Miami River and the Miami Canal, was in 1840 a community of about eight hundred people and a center of much flour-milling activity. Twelve miles to the southwest of Middletown, was Hamilton, the county-seat of Butler County. With 1,140 inhabitants in 1840, it was then gaining a reputation as a manufacturing center and boasted of a finer court-house than the one in Dayton, until the most splendid one in the State was erected in the latter place about 1848. Hamilton was at that time connected by a covered bridge with Rossville across the river, a smaller town preferred by farmers as a trading center. Larger than either Hamilton or Middletown in 1840 was Oxford, near the Indiana line, an important college town, the seat of Miami University.

There were numerous villages in the Miami Valley, in which cotton- and woolen-mills were in operation before 1850. The owners were looked upon as leaders in the economic life of the region. Such a pioneer in the sphere of manufacturing in Ohio was Giles Richards of a prominent Massachusetts family. He had varied industrial interests at Colerain, northwest of Cincinnati, where he lived for a number of years (1828-32) in a new dwelling of logs, with poplar weather-boards, and shingled roof. In 1836, however, he built a more pretentious home with brick-filled walls. Nine rooms, a piazza, and spacious halls, with an ornamental fan window over the doorway, helped to make it an attractive place.⁶²

In all parts of Ohio, however, and particularly in the earlier years around 1825, less well-established families lived in much humbler fashion. An English traveler journeying between Cincinnati and Hillsboro in 1834, found the greater part of the country

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 419-20.

⁶² O. D. Smith, *The Life and Times of Giles Richards* (Columbus, 1936), 17-20, 23-5.



5. COURT-HOUSE, DAYTON

The finest court-house in Ohio in 1850; built 1848-50. Courtesy of Frank J. Roos, Jr.

uncleared, "the soil being of an inferior nature, swampy, and covered with beech-trees, interspersed with 'bottoms,' or alluvial land of excellent quality." The towns and villages were peopled by industrious and cheerful inhabitants, but in the rural districts, where the land had been recently cleared, the log hut and its inhabitants gave "striking evidence of hard toil and severe privation," the women especially appearing worn out and the children "frequently ragged and squalid."⁶³ But, if the wilderness was "no paradise to the first settlers," in the parts of the Little Miami Valley where cultivation had been undertaken a generation before, progress had, in many respects, been remarkably rapid. In 1826, a traveler going northward via that valley (through Lebanon and Xenia) recorded: "The road led through a hilly and well-cultivated country. The fields separated by worm fences adjoin each other, and contain good dwelling-houses and barns. Their extensive

⁶³ Abdy, *Journal of a Residence and Tour*, III, 66.

orchards mostly contain apple and peach trees. I had not seen any place in the United States in so high a state of cultivation. But alas! the rain had made the roads so muddy, that it was with difficulty we proceeded."⁶⁴

It is difficult for twentieth century Ohioans to appreciate fully the surpassing importance of Cincinnati among the cities of the State before 1850. In population it was wholly without a rival within the bounds of Ohio. In 1830 it was over eight times as large as its nearest competitor (Dayton) and in 1850, with 115,435 inhabitants, it far outdistanced Columbus, second in size, with 17,882 people. Its advantages in contrast with those of other communities of the State were equally striking and many travelers were extravagant in their praises of what the city had to offer. One wrote in 1833: "At last I arrived in Cincinnati. The fame of the extraordinary rise of this city had beforehand excited my curiosity to the highest degree. Cincinnati was never mentioned in America without the addition of such surnames as 'The Wonderful,' 'The Western Queen,' etc. Flattering epithets of this kind are generally exaggerated; at least they often appeared so to me; but, in this instance, they were justified. Cincinnati is in every respect an extraordinary city; the only one, perhaps, on record, which has, in the course of twenty-five years, sprung up from nothing to be a place of great consequence, with a population exceeding thirty thousand souls. Banks, University, Museum, Theatre, Athenaeum, Bazaar, and Hospitals, are now seen, where, a quarter of a century ago, nothing but the primitive forest was standing untouched."⁶⁵

An English visitor to Cincinnati in 1840 commented that within a half century it had attained more architectural beauty in its public buildings "than probably any city of the same age on the surface of the globe."⁶⁶ The town was built upon two levels. At the river's edge steamboats lay, with the prow of each pointed diagonally to the shore. A well-paved bank sloped up to the lower level of

⁶⁴ Bernhard, *Travels*, II, 138-9.

⁶⁵ C. D. Arfwedson, *United States and Canada in 1832, 1833, and 1834* (London, 1834), II, 126-7.

⁶⁶ Buckingham, *Eastern and Western States*, II, 382.

the town where stores and warehouses were to be found. From this lower level the town rose "by a gentle ascent to a higher bank" which was about a mile wide, and along the two levels the town stretched for about three miles following the river. The streets were paved with limestone, and sidewalks were of brick, generally bordered with shade trees, although as late as 1834 a Frenchman had complained that there were no parks, walks, or fountains.⁶⁷ Many private homes were two- or three-story brick structures, those of the wealthy often being of hewn stone. There were fewer wooden buildings and more homes possessing "pretty gardens, rich grassplots, and ornamental shrubberies and flowers surrounding them" than in most eastern cities. The stores, large and attractive in appearance, offered imported articles, though at higher prices than in cities of the Atlantic Coast. Newspaper advertisements reveal that the newest fashions from London and New York, seal skins from the Pacific, sweetmeats direct from Havana, and oysters in jars—seventeen days from Philadelphia—were obtainable at shops in the city.⁶⁸ During the 'thirties the hotels were already numerous, and one of them, the Broadway, was apparently "one of the cleanest and most comfortable" west of the mountains. To one traveler, however, the guests at Mack's Hotel seemed to be mostly merchants who did not keep house and the haste of twenty minutes for an Easter dinner appeared unnecessary. By 1851, the newly completed Burnet House (of bracketed Italian architecture and with 340 rooms) was heralded "as undoubtedly the most spacious and probably the best hotel, in its interior and domestic arrangements of any in the world."⁶⁹ Many of the churches were substantial buildings with some degree of elegance, but the most ornamental edifices in the city were those occupied by banking institutions. One of these, at one time occupied by the branch of the United States Bank, had a façade of free stone, ornamented

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 386-7; Michel Chevalier, *Society, Manners, and Politics in the United States* (Boston, 1839), 192-3.

⁶⁸ *Cincinnati Gazette*, Jan. 3, 1828.

⁶⁹ Mrs. Basil Hall, *Aristocratic Journey* (New York, 1931), 285; Thwaites, ed., *Western Travels*, XIX, 136; Charles Cist, *Cincinnati in 1851* (Cincinnati, 1851), 164.



6. BURNET HOUSE, CINCINNATI

The city's leading hotel in 1850. From Charles Cist, *Cincinnati in 1851* (Cincinnati, 1851), frontispiece.

with a handsome cornice, and presented "one of the chastest specimens of architecture within the city."⁷⁰

Cincinnati was already confronted with some of the problems of administration which concern every modern city. One of these was that of water supply and fire protection. In 1826, water from the river was raised by a steam engine into a reservoir on a near-by hill, an elevation of 158 feet above low-water mark and about thirty above the upper plain of the city. From the reservoir, two lines of wooden pipes conveyed the water into the city where by means of smaller pipes laid along the principal streets, about five hundred families and many manufactories were supplied. Even then, however, plans for further development were under way, as a new reservoir with a capacity of over 300,000 gallons was being con-

⁷⁰ Drake and Mansfield, *Cincinnati*, 29; Buckingham, *Eastern and Western States*, II, 391.

structed, served by iron pipes eight and ten inches in diameter. In 1817, the municipal council had granted to an individual (after 1826 a corporation) a monopoly for ninety-nine years for supplying the city with water. In turn the city was to be paid \$100 a year and receive water free for fire protection. In 1839 the corporation disposed of its interests to the city. As the years went by, facilities were greatly increased, and iron pipes gradually replaced the older wooden conduits. By 1851, the average daily consumption of water was about 2,300,000 gallons.⁷¹

In 1826, there were in Cincinnati four fire engines served by companies of twenty-five members each, a hose company of twenty-five members, a hook and ladder company of thirty men with equipment, and a company for the preservation of fire buckets. The city had five substantial brick cisterns in different parts of the city, each of capacity sufficient to provide 5,000 gallons of water for fire purposes. As the years went by these facilities were increased, and in 1841 the city had thirty-four fire cisterns.⁷² Before 1825, Cincinnati had no special police officers, only the sheriff, marshal and their deputies, with three constables. By 1826, however, the city had established a city watch of two captains and eighteen men, although their work was probably considerably hampered by the lack of any system of street illumination. By 1826, the county jail was the only place available for the imprisonment of malefactors within the city, a situation which caused old and hardened offenders to be thrown together with young first offenders.

Cincinnati, far more than the average city, enjoyed a prosperity sustained by a diversity of economic interests, including trade, ship-building, navigation and manufacturing. In 1826, statistics indicated that five hundred were employed in navigation, eight hundred in trade and mercantile pursuits, and three thousand in manufacturing. Situated at the mouth of the Miami Canal and

⁷¹ Cist, *Cincinnati in 1851*, 106.

⁷² Drake and Mansfield, *Cincinnati*, 30-2; Charles Cist, *Cincinnati in 1841* (Cincinnati, 1841), 145.

opposite the mouth of the Licking, its location on the Ohio River and the early enterprise of its business leaders, made it an important canal and river port. Its very size, moreover, enabled it to supply the country trader who kept "an assortment of everything vendible" with almost everything he might require. But manufacturing was doubtless the chief support of the city. "The Artizans and Manufacturers" were said to constitute the bone and sinew of the community, and upon them the "permanent prosperity" of the city seemed to depend.⁷³

By mid-century, as manufacturing was further expanded and diversified in the river city, the optimism of its people was clearly reflected by Horace Greeley, after a visit in 1850, when he wrote, "It requires no keenness of observation to perceive that Cincinnati is destined to become the focus and mart for the grandest circle of manufacturing thrift on this continent. . . . I doubt if there is another spot on the earth where food, fuel, cotton, timber, iron, can all be concentrated so cheaply—that is, at so moderate a cost of human labor in producing and bringing them together—as here. Such fatness of soil, such a wealth of mineral treasure—coal, iron, salt, and the finest clays for all purposes of use—and all cropping from the steep, facile banks of placid, though not sluggish, navigable rivers. How many Californias could equal, in permanent worth, this valley of the Ohio!"⁷⁴

⁷³ Drake and Mansfield, *Cincinnati*, 57, 59.

⁷⁴ Cist, *Cincinnati in 1851*, 257.

CHAPTER II

The People of Ohio

IN 1825, the Ohioans of longest residence in the State were of course the American Indians. By that time, however, such a long-established tribe as the Miamis had left for less crowded areas, while Wyandots, Ottawas, Senecas, and a few of the once numerous Shawnees and Delawares remained on reservations in the midst of the white man's country.¹ Travelers journeying through Ohio during this period were impressed by the presence and activities of these reservation Indians. Thus, an Englishman going from Cincinnati to Sandusky via Urbana and Bucyrus in 1827, commented: "When we arrived at the latter end of our journey we saw some fine lands destitute of woods, but interspersed with small clumps, resembling those in some of the parks of our nobility; they were the reserved possessions of the Indians, when they sold the adjoining country to the commissioners of the United States. We wished to have entered some of their houses, which were well built, with sash windows and shingle roofs, but were told that in general they avoided receiving the visits of white strangers. Many of them were wealthy, as appeared from their fine cultivated fields and large herds of cattle and horses. Near one village, we met a young Indian driving a handsome waggon, drawn by four remarkably fine oxen, which would have done credit to any English gentleman; the youth was well dressed, and passed our carriage with a look that sufficiently marked his consequence. In the course of the day we saw near the road several wild turkeys, whose splendid plumage . . . far excelled in appearance those of the domestic ones. We also conversed with several Indians, some of whom were on horseback, armed with rifles; they were civil, and seemed pleased at the notice we took of them. A squaw, with her son behind her, accompanied

¹ H. C. Shetrone, "The Indian in Ohio," *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, XXVII (1918), 449.

us some miles. Her dress was a loose blue cloth coat, with scarlet pantaloons, black beaver hat and feathers, and her face was painted bright red."²

In Ohio in 1825, there were approximately 800 Shawnees, 551 Senecas, 542 Wyandots, 377 Ottawas, and 80 Delawares.³ The onward march of the white man raised the question of how long the Indian might continue to live on the reservations set aside for him. John Lewis (*Quoit-awy-pied*), a Shawnee from Ohio, February 1825, informed the Federal Government that the tribes of the Northwest were all eager to remove west of the Mississippi. The result was a large meeting at the present Wapakoneta, Ohio, in March of the same year, where Lewis Cass, as spokesman for the Government, conferred with the tribes of that vicinity. He was informed that the Shawnees who had located in Missouri were desirous of having their Ohio kinsmen join them in any place which might be designated for the Missouri tribesmen.⁴ But quite another point of view was expressed by some of the Protestant missionaries who labored among the Ohio Indians. They contended that the Ohio red men were by no means so desirous of leaving as the agents of the Government reported. One religious worker described a scene where the old men of the tribe sat in council, mourning from Monday morning until Tuesday night the migration which the white men had decreed for them. The tribesmen had hoped that by exemplary conduct they might win the white man's esteem and remain in their accustomed homes, in order to develop the common life of both races. As a matter of fact, Ohio officials took no steps to secure the transfer of these Indians. The Cincinnati *Chronicle* opposed their removal to the West as expensive and not conducive to civilizing them, and urged that they be given individual allotments of land in fee simple with

² William Bullock, *Sketch of a Journey through the Western States* (London, 1827), xviii ff.

³ U. S. Census Office, *Seventh Census of the U. S., 1850* (Washington, 1853), xciv.

⁴ A. H. Abel, "The History of Events Resulting in Indian Consolidation West of the Mississippi River," American Historical Association, *Annual Report, 1906* (Washington, 1908), I, 383-5 and notes.

adequate schools, so that they might settle down as ordinary farmers.⁵

During the administration of President John Quincy Adams no treaties were made with the red men in Ohio to bring about their migration westward. Under President Andrew Jackson, however, extensive cessions of land were made by the Ohio Indians. The Delawares, who for the most part had left the Ohio country prior to the Treaty of Greenville of 1795, ceded the last of their lands in Ohio in August, 1829, by relinquishing their reservation (an area three miles square), immediately south of the Wyandot territory at Upper Sandusky.⁶ In the same year Colonel James B. Gardiner was appointed register of the Land Office with authority as special agent to treat with other tribes in order to secure their removal from Ohio. John McLean, postmaster-general and later Federal Supreme Court justice, sharply criticized the appointment and claimed that Gardiner had admitted that "he had lied enough for the old hero [Jackson] to pay for" his office, that Gardiner was frequently drunk and on one occasion had fallen from his horse, and being too drunk to ride, "was brought back in a wagon loaded with corn."⁷ In spite of these charges, however, Gardiner's efforts in the spring and summer of 1831, resulted in a series of treaties, although some Ohio newspapers, such as the Chillicothe *Scioto Gazette*, severely censured his methods and character.⁸ Certain Quakers were actively hostile to him. No doubt considerable partisan feeling entered into the matter, and it was Senator Thomas Ewing, an anti-Jacksonian, who asked the Senate to investigate the authenticity of four of the agreements made with the Indians and presented for ratification. The Committee on Indian Affairs consequently questioned David Robb, Indian subagent, but he merely asserted that Gardiner had been overzealous in greatly overemphasizing the danger to the Indians of their remaining in Ohio,

⁵ March 29, 1828.

⁶ U. S. Laws, Statutes, etc., *U. S. Statutes-at-Large* (Boston, 1846), VII, 326.

⁷ John McLean to Duff Green, Cincinnati, Sept. 16, 1829, McLean MSS. (in Library of Congress).

⁸ Columbus *Ohio Monitor*, July 27, 1831.

and refused to vouch for the genuineness of the treaties, indicating that he was not familiar with the Seneca and Shawnee languages.⁹

The methods used in connection with the first of these five treaties were not seriously questioned. This agreement was negotiated at Washington in February, 1831, with the Senecas living along the Sandusky River within Seneca and Sandusky counties (the vicinity of Tiffin and Fremont). Only about four hundred red men were involved, and it was agreed that they should be removed to lands west of the Mississippi River adjoining the boundary of Missouri. Some indication of their relatively civilized habits in Ohio is shown by the fact that the sum of six thousand dollars was to be advanced to them because of the improvements made upon the lands which they were ceding. Their live stock, farming implements, and other chattel property which they might not be able to take with them were to be sold by an agent appointed for them and the proceeds paid to the respective owners of such property. Other remuneration in the form of annuities and presents was also made.¹⁰

The four other treaties concluded during the following months were subject to considerable criticism. One of these, the Treaty of Lewiston (Logan County) of July 20, 1831, was made with the mixed bands of Senecas and Shawnees residing in that vicinity, about three hundred in number, who were to be transported to lands in western Missouri and Arkansas, practically adjacent to those set aside for the Senecas of the Sandusky Valley. Similar arrangements were made regarding compensation for improvements, annuities, and presents.¹¹ During the next month (on August 8, 1831) an agreement of very comparable provisions was signed at Wapaghkonnetta (now Wapakoneta) with the Shawnees of that region.¹²

In 1830 a pioneer judge, journeying northwestward from Findlay had reported that "the voyage was a dismal one to Defiance,

⁹ Abel, "Indian Consolidation," 385.

¹⁰ U. S. Laws, *Statutes-at-Large*, VII, 348ff.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 351ff.

¹² *Ibid.*, 355ff.

through an unsettled wilderness of some sixty miles. Its loneliness was only broken by the intervening Indian settlement at Ottawa village, where we were hailed and cheered lustily by the Tahwa Indians."¹³ These red men, however, were not to resist the white man's advance for long. An agreement made at Maumee Bay by the Ottawas who resided along the Blanchard River and at Oquanoxie's Village on the little Auglaize provided (August 30, 1831) for the surrender of reservations totaling thirty-four square miles and for the transfer west of the Mississippi of about two hundred Indians who had been residing in the reserved areas. By the same agreement the Ottawas along the lower Maumee near the rapids of that river surrendered two reservations, totaling forty-five square miles, and agreed to move west of the Mississippi, although they were not willing to depart at that time.¹⁴ Two years later, on February 18, 1833, by a treaty signed at Maumee, Ohio, the Ottawas conveyed the last of their reservations in Ohio, two tracts near the mouth of the Maumee. At the same time patents for individual allotments were promised to a number of Ottawas and several of their special friends. A considerable group of Ottawas from the Maumee Valley was moved westward in 1837.¹⁵

By the end of the decade the only important group of Indians remaining in Ohio was the Wyandot tribe. They had had reservations of almost 150,000 acres in north central Ohio as late as 1820 and had come strongly under the influence of Methodist missionaries.¹⁶ A traveler in the summer of 1830 described the occupants of a public house at Upper Sandusky as "connected with the Wyandots, which tribe by long intercourse with the whites are far advanced in civilization—many of them speak good English, and are considerable proprietors of cattle, grain, etc. All the Indians we saw on this 'Reserve' were well dressed and mounted, and appeared grave and sedate in their manners. They have a resident

¹³ D. Higgins, "Memoirs," H. S. Knapp, *History of the Maumee Valley* (Toledo, 1872), 279.

¹⁴ U. S. Laws, *Statutes-at-Large*, VII, 359ff.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 420ff.; Columbus *Ohio Statesman*, July 27, 1838.

¹⁶ W. W. Sweet, *Circuit-rider Days along the Ohio* (New York, 1923), 66, 74.

missionary amongst them whose labours are said to be quite encouraging.”¹⁷

But the days of the Wyandots in Ohio were numbered. One group that lived at Big Springs on the road between Upper Sandusky and Findlay, separate from the main body of their tribesmen in the vicinity of Upper Sandusky, signed a convention with representatives of the United States Government at McCutchenville, Crawford County, January 19, 1832, by which they surrendered their reservation of 16,000 acres at Big Springs and received a promise of compensation at the rate of \$1.25 per acre. These Wyandots refused to go west of the Mississippi and received permission to locate as they saw fit—in Canada, on their reservation along the Huron River in Michigan, or among other friendly Indians.¹⁸

Some of the Indians of mixed blood in the vicinity of Upper Sandusky took an interest in politics, although those on the reservations were not subject to Ohio jurisdiction. William Walker, who was of white and Indian blood and had been a Wyandot chief, completed fourteen years of service in 1839 as postmaster at Upper Sandusky. The clerk of the courts of Crawford County was one-quarter Indian. Political opponents raised the question as to whether they were disqualified by the restriction of the Ohio Constitution limiting office-holding to “white male inhabitants over 21,” but Walker replied that one of the framers of that constitution of 1802 had assured him that the phrase “white male” had been inserted in that instrument to exclude Negroes, and bore no reference to Indians.”¹⁹

A treaty was negotiated with the Wyandots at Upper Sandusky, March 17, 1842, for the cession of all remaining Wyandot lands in Ohio (about 109,144 acres). The United States agreed to give the Wyandots a perpetual annuity of \$17,500 in specie, to make permanent provision of \$500 a year for the support of a school, to pay the Indians the full value of their improvements, to satisfy their

¹⁷ Thomas Kelah Wharton, “Journal,” July 14, 1830, MS. (in New York Public Library).

¹⁸ U. S. Laws, *Statutes-at-Large*, VII, 364-5.

¹⁹ *Ohio Statesman*, Oct. 22, 29, 1839.

debts owed to citizens of the United States to the amount of \$23,860, and to provide lands for them west of the Mississippi.²⁰

In May, Charles Dickens and his wife stopped for the night at Upper Sandusky and found shelter "at the log Inn, which was the only house of entertainment in the place." The next morning at breakfast the Indian agent who had concluded the treaty with the Wyandots gave "a moving account of their strong attachment to the familiar scenes of their infancy, and in particular to the burial-places of their kindred; and of their great reluctance to leave them." The agent explained how a day or two earlier, in a hut especially constructed for the purpose, the tribe had voted on the question of departure. After discussing the matter, the Indians had lined up to vote, the ayes and nays on opposite sides of the structure, with every male adult voting in his turn. A large minority opposed migration but immediately yielded to the majority decision to move during the following year.²¹ Practically all of them, accordingly, left Upper Sandusky for the trans-Mississippi country in July, 1843, and the day of the red man in Ohio was gone forever!

The removal of the Indian, however, did not mean the passing of the race problem in Ohio. The Negro remained, with tension between the blacks and the whites never completely absent from social, economic, and political life. In 1820 there had been 4,723 free colored persons in the State, an increase of 148.7% over the number residing in Ohio ten years before. During the decade, 1820-1830, the number had more than doubled. By 1840 there were 17,342 and in 1850, 25,279. In 1820 Ohio had ranked twelfth among the states in the number of free Negroes, but by 1850 it had attained sixth place. Even in the latter year, however, the white population constituted as much as 98.72% of the total for the State, in contrast with that of Kentucky, where the percentage was 77.5. The Census of 1830 listed six slaves in Ohio, two in Montgomery County, two in Hamilton, one in Butler, and one in Clark. It is

²⁰ U. S. 27 Cong., 3 Sess. House, Reports, II (1843), no. 160.

²¹ Charles Dickens, *American Notes* (London, 1850), 380-1.

quite probable that these were domestic servants who had been brought from the South by families locating in southern Ohio.²²

The Ohio Constitution of 1802 had recognized the rights of white men only, and the so-called black laws, passed by the State legislature in 1804 and 1807 had severely restricted the Ohio Negro. Free Negroes were practically forbidden to enter the State, for the required bond of \$500 was too high to be met except in the most extraordinary cases. They were also barred from the militia and from testifying against a white man, and their children generally could not attend the public schools.

During pioneer days before 1825, free Negroes were able to live with a fair degree of contentment in Ohio. At the same time, newspapers of the State carried advertisements seeking the return of slaves who had fled from their southern masters. Thus, in 1825, W. T. Barry of Lexington, Kentucky, offered \$100 reward in a Columbus paper for the return of "a likely negro man named John, alias John Tood, about 27 years old, five feet eight inches high, dark colour, [who] has a sprightly appearance, is active and intelligent, dresses neatly, [is] accustomed to waiting in the house, and fond of playing the fiddle."²³

A small number of free Negroes had little farms and had acquired some degree of independence. Some of the negro farm-laborers in the Ohio River counties doubtless were practically slaves whom the whites pretended to hire from Kentucky masters. The vast majority of the Negroes did unskilled labor for white employers, for they were effectively excluded from office work and from skilled crafts. Some of the males found it difficult to secure employment at all, and were supported by female relatives who served as washerwomen and servants. The Ohio River had a definite attraction for negro men, and many obtained odd jobs connected with the loading and unloading of river boats.²⁴ In northern Ohio, Negroes were few and were apt to be of a more ambitious

²² J. D. B. De Bow, *Statistical View of the United States* (Washington, 1854), 63-5.

²³ *Columbus Ohio State Journal*, Oct. 27, 1825.

²⁴ F. U. Quillan, *Color Line in Ohio* (Ann Arbor, 1913), 50-1, 54, 67.

type than those in the southern part of the State. On the entire Western Reserve in 1820 there were only 167 colored people and as late as 1840, only 591. The growth of Cleveland and Sandusky during the next decade, however, attracted numerous Negroes to jobs along the docks, around railway terminals, and in hotels and barbers' shops. By 1850 there were 1,321 colored people on the Reserve.²⁵

The great influx of Negroes into Ohio from 1820 to 1830 stimulated opposition to any further increase in their numbers. In Cincinnati especially, many people became greatly alarmed. In 1826, about 690 colored people resided in the city; in 1829, about 2,258. When Quakers in North Carolina spoke of an intention of freeing their slaves, a writer in the *Cincinnati Gazette* applauded the motive but utterly denied "the propriety or expediency of their sending those persons to infest the towns of Ohio or Indiana."²⁶ In 1829 officials in Cincinnati gave local Negroes sixty days to furnish security as required by the black laws or depart from the city. The allotted time passed, but few Negroes complied with the requirements. Mob rule then broke out for three days and nights and resulted in many casualties. Public meetings debated the desirability of a resolution requesting the township trustees to appropriate funds to remove the free blacks to Canada. The consensus of opinion was against such action, and the Ohio legislature in turn refused to vote money for it. Between one and two thousand Negroes, however, left for Canada with the aid of private funds. In January, 1830, all Negroes in Portsmouth—about eighty—were compelled to leave the community.²⁷

Many Americans at that time still had great confidence in the possibility of colonizing free Negroes in Africa as a solution for the race problem. But Governor Allen Trimble who approved the plan, sounded a warning in his message to the legislature in 1827: "Should this society not succeed in removing the free peo-

²⁵ W. C. Cochran, "Western Reserve and the Fugitive Slave Law," *Western Reserve Historical Society, Publications* (Cleveland) no. 101 (1920), 79-80.

²⁶ June 30, 1826, letter of "Sidney."

²⁷ *Cincinnati Chronicle*, Sept. 19, 26, 1829; *Columbus Ohio Bulletin*, Jan. 14, 1830.

ple of colour to the land of their Fathers, it will be a question of grave and solemn inquiry, how long Ohio will continue to tolerate the emigration to her territory, of this unfortunate and degraded race. Their rapid increase has already given serious alarm to many of our citizens, and it may even now be necessary for us (in self defence) to adopt some measure to counteract the policy of the slave states, which tends to throw from themselves upon us, the whole mass of their free colored population." During the same month a committee of the Ohio House of Representatives reported that the free blacks in the State presented "a serious political and moral evil," that they tended to degrade white labor and furnished in proportion to population eight times as many convicts for the penitentiary as the rest of the population. The committee suggested resolutions urging Federal support for the colonization society and more stringent State legislation to prevent additional free Negroes from settling in Ohio, if they were not citizens of another state. In 1832, an Ohio legislative committee again made a similar report.²⁸ The leading Columbus newspaper commented: "Their [free blacks'] residence is becoming daily an evil of increasing magnitude and well worthy of Legislative interference. We not only have at present, a proportion of free blacks, most likely greater than in any other free State, but the tide of emigration from the slave states daily throws increased numbers on our shores."²⁹

In the meantime, Liberia was not proving to be attractive to the average free Negro in Ohio, and one wrote that his brethren detested "the very name of Africa, much less going to reside on its barren and heathen coast."³⁰ Jacob Burnet of Cincinnati, a patron of the colonization society, subscribed a hundred dollars annually for ten years, but the impossibility of securing adequate funds by private subscription must have been evident to all when the State society reported contributions of only \$466.66 for the year 1832.³¹

²⁸ *Ohio State Journal*, Feb. 1, 1832.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, Dec. 19, 22, 1827.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, Dec. 26, 1827.

³¹ *Ibid.*, Dec. 29, 1832.

One hopeful soul, however, suggested that the national debt would soon be paid and that then the Federal Government would have ample funds for colonization purposes.³²

Feeling against the Negroes continued, especially in southern Ohio. In 1833, the death of John Randolph, the eccentric Virginian, led to an effort to establish his 518 emancipated slaves on a large tract of land which he had purchased in Mercer County, Ohio, where he had hoped to provide each with forty acres and a cabin. The project thoroughly infuriated the whites of the vicinity and made it necessary to distribute the freedmen elsewhere, in the neighborhood of Troy, Piqua, Sidney, and Xenia, Ohio. In April, 1827, seventy Negroes freed by another Virginian had settled in Lawrence County.³³

In 1835 the *Cincinnati Gazette* gave an unflattering account of a negro community in Brown County called the "Camps," settled in 1820. These blacks were described as so lazy and stupid that white farmers would not employ them. Their indolence allegedly was so great that they did not exert themselves even to fiddle or dance. Public sentiment in the vicinity of Waverly, Pike County, at about the same time was so strong that Negroes were forced from the community.³⁴ In the Constitutional Convention of 1850-51, John L. Green of Ross County expressed a rather widely prevalent attitude when he said: "The presence of the blacks among us is a nuisance, especially in the southern portion of the State; and the people of this portion of the State would submit to no tax more cheerfully than that by which they might get rid of this nuisance."³⁵

In some respects prejudice against the Negro was stronger in parts of Ohio than in the South. In the latter section, the status of the Negro was fairly well fixed, but north of the Ohio it was somewhat uncertain, and cheap free negro labor was a source of keen irritation to poor white workmen. In northern Ohio, where few

³² "Junius" in *St. Clairsville (Ohio) Gazette*, printed in *Ohio State Journal*, Jan. 25, 1832.

³³ Quillan, *Color Line in Ohio*, 29.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 67; Henry Howe, *Historical Collections of Ohio* (Norwalk, 1896), II, 427-8.

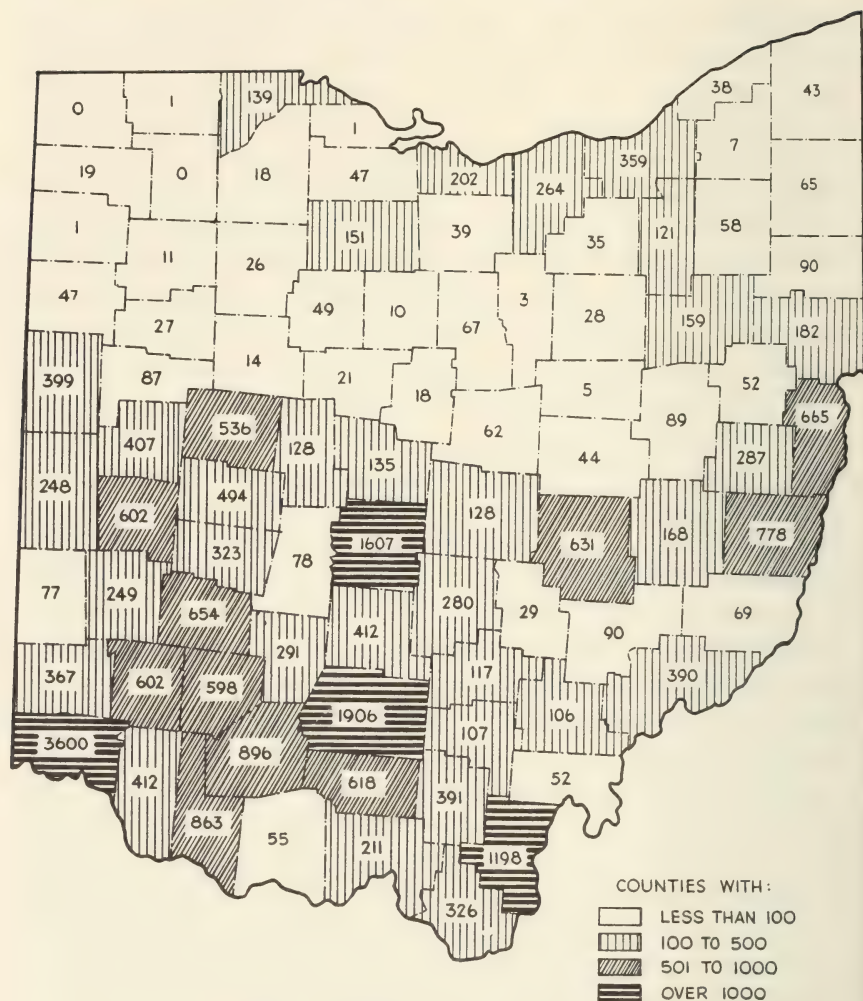
³⁵ Ohio Constitutional Convention, *Reports, 1850-1851* (Columbus, 1851), II, 983.

Negroes were found, little race prejudice developed. As late as 1850, all twelve counties of the Western Reserve region had only 1,321 Negroes, in contrast with the 1,906 found in Ross County alone. Even on the Reserve, however, there had been a marked increase in the number of Negroes, especially in Cuyahoga, Erie, and Lorain counties, between 1840 and 1850. They were drawn to the two former counties by the opportunities around docks, railroad terminals, hotels, and barbers' shops in Cleveland and Sandusky, and to the latter by the liberal attitude toward coracial education prevailing at Oberlin College. On the whole Reserve there had been 167 Negroes in 1820; 184 in 1830; 591 in 1840; and 1,321 in 1850. In 1840 the Negroes of Cincinnati constituted about one-twentieth of the city's population. A decade later the proportion of Negroes in Columbus considerably exceeded that found in Cincinnati. One thousand two hundred and thirty-three Negroes formed about one-fourteenth of the capital city's population (17,867), while 3,172 Negroes constituted about one thirty-sixth of the people of Cincinnati (115,438).³⁶

Now and then, exceptional Negroes emerged, even amidst the limitations imposed by the prevailing social order. Thus, Edward James Roye (1815-1872), born at Newark, resolved to escape the restrictions imposed by racial prejudice in Ohio and set out for Liberia in 1846 with a stock of goods to sell to the natives. He became the leading merchant of that country, and was later inaugurated as the fifth president of Liberia. John Mercer Langston (1829-1879) was the offspring of illicit relations between the owner of a Virginia estate and a favorite slave of African and Indian blood. After the death of the father, Langston was sent to Chillicothe where a friend of the deceased gave the youngster the attention and education of a son. Two years in a Cincinnati private school were followed by preparatory, collegiate, and theological training at Oberlin. Later, Langston became acting president of Howard University and minister-resident to Haiti.

The overwhelming majority of Ohioans were, of course, of

³⁶ Charles Cist, *Cincinnati in 1851* (Cincinnati, 1851), 46.



MAP 2. NEGROES IN OHIO, 1850

Based upon statistics in J. D. B. DeBow, *Statistical View of the United States* (Washington, 1854). A somewhat similar map appears in Frank U. Quillan, *The Color Line in Ohio* (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1913), p. 74.

Caucasian stock. Before 1825, groups of varied sectional and racial backgrounds had come to Ohio to diversify and enrich the life of the State. During the second quarter of the century, the Virginian,

the New Englander, as well as many from the Middle States, and a rapidly increasing number of foreign-born, found their way to Ohio. The Virginians, including those who had lived for a time in Kentucky, had been the predominant element in Ohio during the first years of settlement and maintained this position, from the standpoint of numbers and influence, in the Virginia Military District. The earliest focus of New England culture—Marietta—still reflected the strength and weakness characteristic of the early communities east of the Hudson. The Western Reserve was a larger center of Puritan stock and traditions that developed with especial rapidity after the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825. In the first legislature of Ohio, members from the Western Reserve constituted only one-eighteenth of that body; in 1820, they constituted one-tenth, and in 1850 one-sixth. Up to 1850 this region was settled almost wholly by persons of New England stock, though some had lived for a time in New York or Pennsylvania. "It was an enterprising virile, intelligent and homogeneous community of farmers with just enough millers, manufacturers, merchants and professional men to supply the local demand."³⁷ In other parts of Ohio there were small islands of New England influence, as at Granville in Licking County.

The Symmes Purchase in southwestern Ohio had first been opened under the auspices of a company of men from New Jersey, but Kentuckians originally from Virginia constituted a major portion of the early settlers there. In 1839, when Cincinnati had a population of somewhat more than forty thousand people, approximately ten thousand names were listed in the city directory. Of these, 1,578 gave Germany as the place of their nativity; 1,098 gave Pennsylvania; 916, Ohio; 717, Ireland; 717, New Jersey; 679, England; 607, New York; 521, Virginia; 487, Maryland, with the rest from scattered states and countries.³⁸ In Cincinnati, New Englanders were relatively few, but they were closely attached to each other, and to some degree a New England background served as

³⁷ Cochran, "Western Reserve and Fugitive Slave Law," 78.

³⁸ Cincinnati *Gazette*, Dec. 4, 1839.

a passport to good society and to favorable business contacts. Among the New England group were such well-known figures as John C. Wright, Bellamy Storer, William Greene, and Salmon P. Chase.³⁹ In 1850, of the 55,468 American-born residents of Cincinnati, 33,258 were born in Ohio, 5,005 in Pennsylvania; 3,331 in New York; 2,370 in Virginia; 2,223 in Kentucky; 1,663 in Maryland; 1,546 in New Jersey; 1,256 in Indiana; 1,166 in Massachusetts; 500 in Connecticut; 406 in Louisiana; and lesser numbers in other states.⁴⁰

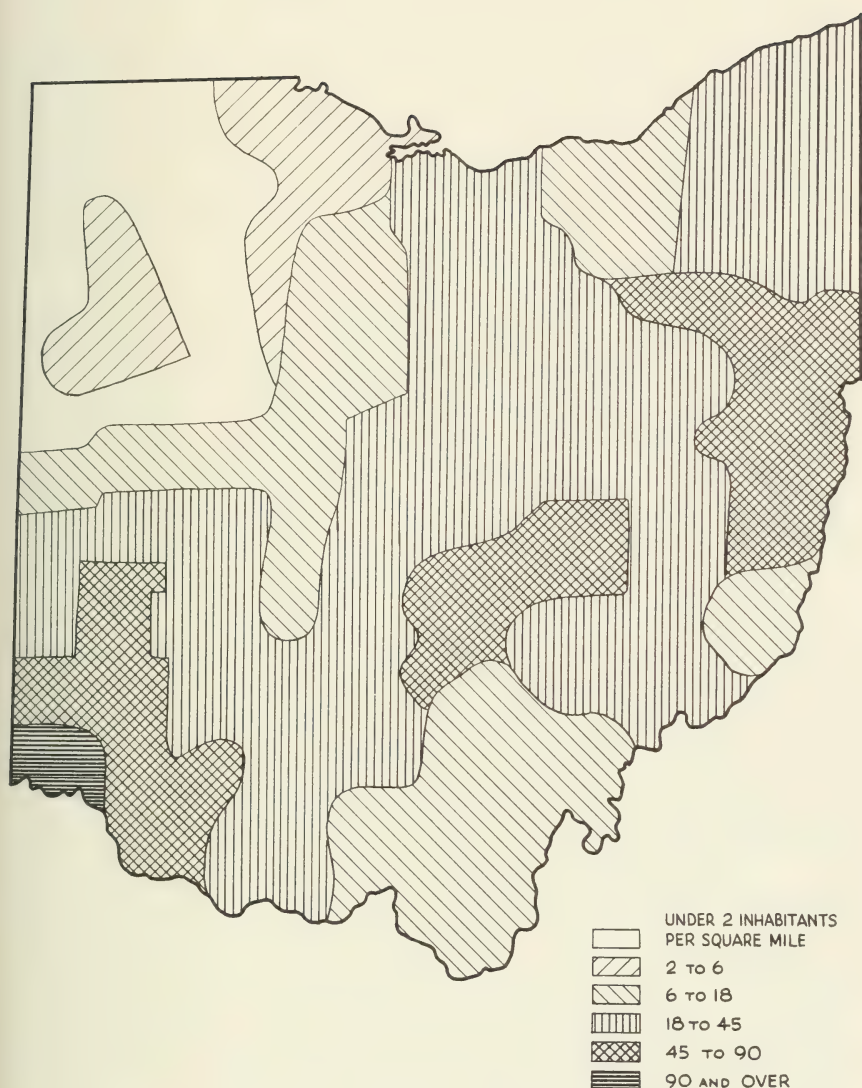
The area south of the Western Reserve and west of Pennsylvania was peopled before 1830 by various groups, which included English Quakers from the Eastern Seaboard, with considerable numbers of Pennsylvania Germans and Scotch-Irish, and after 1830 a goodly number from New York, western Pennsylvania, Germany, and Ireland.⁴¹ The development of the New York and Ohio canal systems facilitated the movement of the latter groups. Many Irish laborers came west to help dig the Ohio Canal, and located thereafter in the "shanty towns" which developed along the new artery of trade. A little later both Irish and German workmen came to work on railroad construction, and frequently remained as permanent settlers.

Northwestern Ohio, the region of the Black Swamp with the inevitable agues and fevers, was the last part of the State to be settled. Shortly after the War of 1812 and with the subsequent development of the timber industry, French—some of them from Canada—came to this region. Germans, who had a knack of seeking out the fertile sections, helped to drain the swamp and to develop the area into a garden spot of Ohio. Thus, one township in Allen County was called German Township, and Minster (named for Munster, Westphalia), New Bremen, Glandorf, and New Bavaria, indicated the Teutonic origin of their founders. Some helped to pay for their

³⁹ [A. G. W.] Carter, *The Old Court House* (Cincinnati, 1880), 120-1.

⁴⁰ Cist, *Cincinnati in 1851*, 46.

⁴¹ R. E. Chaddock, *Ohio before 1850; a Study in the Early Influence of Pennsylvania and Southern Populations in Ohio*, Columbia University, *Studies in History, Economics and Public Law* (New York), XXXI (1908), 42-3.



MAP 3. DENSITY OF POPULATION IN OHIO, 1830

Based upon *Census Atlas for 1900* (Washington, 1903), plate 6.

farms by working on the Miami and Erie Canal. In this part of the State, Irish immigrants were only less important numerically than the Germans. Many worked on the canal and eventually settled in towns such as Defiance and Toledo, and a few became farmers. Welsh towns like Gomer and Venedocia were also founded in this section, and in 1834 settlers from Scotland located at Scotch Ridge in Wood County. Some English and New Englanders, many of the latter having settled for a time in New York State, were among the most active leaders of the region.⁴²

Early census returns do not furnish all the data which we might wish about the nativity of the early settlers. Some idea of the places of birth of Ohio's citizenry, however, can be gained from noting the nativity of the members of the State legislature, although such information does not furnish a wholly *accurate* index as to the origin of the total population. In 1825-26, out of 106 members of the Ohio legislature, Pennsylvania was the birthplace of thirty-two, Virginia of twenty-one, Connecticut of thirteen, New York of seven, Massachusetts of seven, Ohio of three, the rest coming from other places.⁴³ In percentages, thirty per cent. were born in Pennsylvania, twenty in Virginia, and eleven in Connecticut. All of the Middle States (Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, and Delaware) furnished forty-three per cent., the Southern States twenty-five per cent., and all of New England twenty-five per cent. By 1839-40, all the Middle States furnished forty, all the Southern States, nineteen, and all of New England only nine per cent. In 1825, native sons of the young State of Ohio were few in number in the legislative seats. In 1827-28 there were actually only two.⁴⁴ Thereafter the increase in the proportion of legislators who were born within the bounds of the State was rapid. After 1840, Ohio contributed more than any other single state, though some of the native-born Ohioans still reflected to some degree the sectional characteristics which were their ancestral heritage.

⁴² M. L. Ziebold, "Immigrant Groups in Northwestern Ohio to 1860," M. A. thesis, Ohio State University, 1937, 3-77.

⁴³ *Ravenna Western Courier*, Mar. 11, 1826.

⁴⁴ *Niles' Weekly Register* (Baltimore, Md.), XXXIII (1827), 275.

All in all, by 1850, the majority of Ohioans were people whose parents or grandparents had lived in the Middle or Southern States, especially the back country of Pennsylvania and Virginia. The principal racial strain was undoubtedly Scotch-Irish, although the German (including Pennsylvania Dutch), the New England Puritan, and the English from the seaboard south of the Hudson, were important elements in the cultural and biological heritage of Ohio's population.⁴⁵ By 1850, most Ohioans were themselves natives of Ohio. The census figures indicated that of the 1,980,329 people in the State,

1,215,876 or 61.56% were Ohio-born;

541,870 or 27.07% were born elsewhere in the United States;

218,193 or 11.15% were born in foreign countries;

4,390 or .22% were of unknown nativity as to place.⁴⁶

Among foreign-born groups, the natives of Germany led, with 111,257, followed by the Irish (51,562), the English (25,660), the French (7,375), the Welsh (5,849), the Scotch (5,232), and those from British America (5,880). No other nationalities were represented by as many as five thousand of their native sons and daughters.⁴⁷ During the period before 1850, the Western Reserve area outside of Cuyahoga County contained few persons of foreign birth—in striking contrast with the situation there three-quarters of a century later. In Cleveland as late as 1850, the chief activities of the foreign-born noted in the newspapers were those of the Scotch, who had a lively St. Andrew's Society. In the late 'forties the beginnings of railroad development and the opening of the mines stimulated the coming of Irish and Welsh to northeastern Ohio.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Chaddock, *Ohio before 1850*, 43ff.

⁴⁶ *Seventh Census*, 851. Of those born elsewhere the principal states of their nativity were:

Pennsylvania	200,634	Connecticut	22,855
Virginia	85,762	Massachusetts	18,763
New York	83,979	Vermont	14,320
Maryland	36,698	Kentucky	13,829
New Jersey	23,532	Indiana	7,377

No other states were represented in Ohio by as many as 5,000 natives.

⁴⁷ *Seventh Census*, xxxvi-vii.

⁴⁸ Cochran, "Western Reserve and Fugitive Slave Law," 79.

After 1825, a steady and increasing stream of Germans settled in the State. By 1830, approximately five per cent. of the population of Cincinnati was German; by 1840, twenty-three per cent.; and by 1850, twenty-seven per cent. Together with their children born in the United States, the Germans as early as 1840 constituted 14,163 of the 46,382 persons in the city.⁴⁹ By 1850, many were buying their own homes, especially along the northern outskirts of the city, although among early German immigrants there had been a noticeable tendency to squander such property as they had brought with them.⁵⁰ In 1840, considerable excitement developed in Cincinnati because some Democrats urged that Germans should insist upon the right to vote, although unnaturalized, on the ground that the Ohio Constitution gave all white males over twenty-one, who had resided in the State one year and had paid taxes, the right of suffrage. The Ohio Supreme Court, however, had decided in 1817, against the right of unnaturalized citizens to vote, and the Germans of Ohio did not attempt to defy that precedent.⁵¹ After the unsuccessful Revolution of 1848, a few German radicals arrived, notably the gifted but violently anticlerical Friedrich Hassaurek. Columbus was also an important center of German settlement, beginning with the early 1830's.⁵² Lancaster, Ohio, had been settled by Pennsylvania Germans, but these were soon joined by newcomers from Wurttemberg, and here as in other Ohio communities, German names in large gold letters were generally affixed to the signs over the retail stores. By 1834, there were about 150 Germans in Chillicothe, and other Ohio towns were receiving similar groups. Washington County (Marietta) received its first German settlers in 1833, when a movement for popular rights in the Palatinate (1832) had ended in failure.⁵³

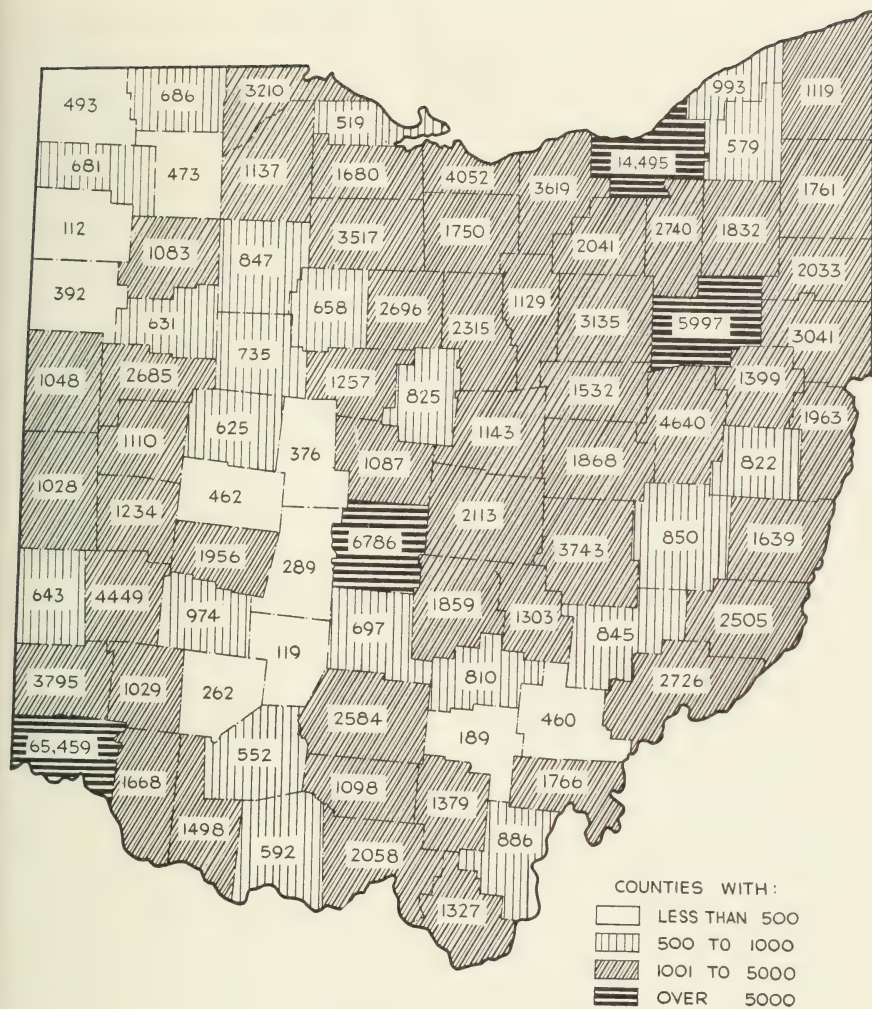
⁴⁹ Charles Cist, *Cincinnati in 1841* (Cincinnati, 1841), 37, 39; A. B. Faust, *German Element in the United States* (New York, 1927), II, 426.

⁵⁰ R. G. Thwaites, ed., *Early Western Travels, 1748-1846* (Cleveland, 1904-07), XXIV, 144-5.

⁵¹ *Cincinnati Gazette*, Oct. 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 1840.

⁵² A. E. Lee, *History of the City of Columbus* (New York, 1892), II, 278-9.

⁵³ Karl Bernhard, Duke of Saxe-Weimar, *Travels through North America during the Years 1825 and 1826* (Philadelphia, 1828), II, 512; *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, II (1888) 55ff.



MAP 4. FOREIGN-BORN IN OHIO, 1850

Based upon census returns in J. D. B. DeBow, *Statistical View of the United States* (Washington, 1854).

The Irish who came to Ohio before 1825 were largely Scotch-Irish, many of whom had lived for a time in the Middle States or in Virginia or Kentucky. Most of them were Ulster Protestants like James Wilson, who became a Steubenville editor, and was

destined to be the grandfather of the World War President. It is difficult to know whether certain early settlers were Irish or Scotch-Irish, but among the early settlers from the Emerald Isle, the latter group clearly predominated. By 1830, however, considerable numbers from southern Ireland, most of whom were Catholics, had settled in Ohio. In March, 1829, a committee of Cincinnati Irishmen published an address "To Irishmen and others disposed to befriend Ireland," announcing that an association had been formed "to assist and cheer, with some pecuniary aid, and by the influence of a united voice, the Catholic Association of Ireland in accomplishing . . . the repeal of those unequal and cruel laws, which 140 years ago were enacted to maintain what has so long been known, and so bloodily exemplified under the name of Protestant Ascendancy."⁵⁴

With discontent rampant and famine adding its terrors to the unsatisfactory situations prevailing in Ireland during the late 'thirties and 'forties, thousands of Irishmen sought a better life in America, and many found their way to Ohio. The building of the canals offered ready employment, and Irish communities developed, not unlike the crude shanty-towns of the eastern seaboard. When John Baptist Purcell, himself a native of Ireland, became the Catholic bishop of Cincinnati in 1833, he found that in one parish the Protestant Americans were leaving the neighborhood because of the influx of such newcomers.⁵⁵

Most of the Irish settled in cities, for their love of sociability prompted them to shun the isolation of the pioneer farm. When they did locate in rural districts they frequently lamented that the shores of Lake Erie were "a thousand miles from home, and five hundred from any place."⁵⁶ By 1850, the Irish were second only to the Germans among the foreign-born of Cincinnati. Numbering 13,616 at that time, they tended to live in the lowlands.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Cincinnati *Gazette*, April 8, 1829.

⁵⁵ M. A. McCann, ed., "Bishop Purcell's Journal, 1833-1836," *Catholic Historical Review* (Washington, D. C.), V (1919), 239-56.

⁵⁶ Thwaites, ed., *Western Travels*, XVIII, 342.

⁵⁷ Cist, *Cincinnati in 1851*, 48.

Most of the Irish became Democrats, and soon some of the older established elements in the population were objecting to the extent to which, in such places as Shelby County, the "Irish canalers" were influencing the elections. The spirit of nativism found expression in one Whig newspaper which declared that a real problem was presented by "the swarms of indigent foreigners, whom the selfish policy of European governments is vomiting upon our shores, and who, from their ignorance, vicious habits, and former associations, are far better calculated to swell the numbers, or increase the violence of a mob, or to assist an ambitious and unprincipled demagogue in overturning the liberties of our country, than to discharge with soberness and discretion the duties of American citizens." Yet even this paper admitted that to close the door to immigrants would be inconsistent with the spirit of American institutions and with the traditional role of America as an asylum for the oppressed, and that an admixture of peoples stimulated "activity and enterprise." Although rejecting all property qualifications as "inconsistent with the equality which forms the basis of our political system," the paper suggested that immigrants be required, prior to naturalization, to have an understanding and reading knowledge of the English language.⁵⁸

Thus, Ohioans of the second quarter of the nineteenth century were drawn from varying backgrounds of birth and culture. As in most relatively new regions of settlement, the male sex predominated in Ohio.⁵⁹ It was, moreover, a prolific state, with large families the rule among all classes of people. As a result, in 1850, over thirty per cent. of the population of Ohio was under ten years of age and almost eighty-four per cent. was under forty years of age. Only 1.3 per cent. of the population was over seventy.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ *Ohio Statesman*, Nov. 19, 1839; *Ohio State Journal*, Aug. 27, 1836.

⁵⁹ In 1820 there had been 300,607 males to 275,965 females; in 1830, 479,713 to 448,616; in 1840, 775,360 to 726,762; and in 1850, 1,004,117 to 950,933.

⁶⁰ J. D. B. De Bow, *Statistical View*, 48, 51.

CHAPTER III

An Agricultural State

OUR State is essentially agricultural," asserted Governor Allen Trimble in his annual message to the legislature in December, 1829.¹ That statement was still true in 1850. Early in the period, the average Ohioan lived in the country in a house of logs. The best country homes were of hewn logs, with doors, windows, a shingled roof, a brick chimney, and a carefully laid floor both below and above the principal living quarters.² A typical home of prosperous Ohio farmers during the 1840's in the Little Miami Valley consisted of a commodious mansion of hewn logs. The two principal sections, each one and a half stories high, were separated, and in a way united, by a paved rectangular open space, protected by a clapboard roof. The eastern section was used for every-day purposes—kitchen, dining room, dormitory, and work shop; the lower part of the western section was an old-fashioned parlor, set aside for Sunday and special occasions. On the second floor were sleeping quarters, notably lacking in light and air. In the much-used eastern section of the house, there was a large fireplace, with an iron crane and brass andirons. Above hung a long rifle, and on the opposite wall, powder-horns and shot-pouches arranged in decorative fashion. In a corner of the room there was a loom operated by hand. Candles were the only means of illumination. Across the pavement, the parlor was fitted out in more formal style. On the walls were two colored wood cuts or engravings, protected by frames and glass. One was an heroic likeness of Daniel O'Connell, the Irish patriot; the other represented "Isabel," a cherry-lipped damsel with spangled bodice and a smart hat be-

¹ Columbus *Ohio State Journal*, Dec. 9, 1829.

² W. C. Howells, *Recollections of Life in Ohio from 1813 to 1840* (Cincinnati 1895), 118.

decked with waving ostrich feathers. A porch used for informal relaxation was attached to the south side of the house, where a long bench and a number of stools invited the weary adult to an interval of smoking and chatting. A tin wash-basin, a pitcher and towels provided adequate toilet facilities, while the scythe, sickle, hoe, rake, axes, fishing poles, and husking pegs were on hooks near-by ready for work or recreation. The well-curb a short distance away was equipped with an iron-bound bucket attached to a grape-vine rope. The cool milk house in the yard had a flat earth floor on which rested crocks of butter, pots of cream, and a variety of pans. In the barnyard, a log building served as a horse-stable, corn-crib, and cow-shed. With the passing of time, it had proved inadequate, hence a more modern structure had been added, constructed from sills and beams made in the woods. A chicken-coop, a hog-pen, and a sheepfold were near-by. Not far away was the more decorative, enclosed vegetable and flower garden, where food for the table, and flowering shrubs—the lilac, snow-ball, and burning bush—were growing. An orchard produced its yearly crops of cherries, apples, and peaches.³ The *average* country home in Ohio during the period was more primitive and less prosperous than the one just described. Yet some possessed, in addition to the outbuildings mentioned above, others for baking, making soap, and smoking meats.

Women of that day worked extremely hard, not only doing the cooking, washing, cleaning, spinning, knitting, sewing, and other tasks about the house but generally taking care of a family of from four to fifteen children. Among New England families in Ohio the men and boys did the milking, but in other families, this was regarded as women's work. Women also did the churning (with a dasher churn), cultivated the vegetables and flowers, tended the fowl, and did the marketing. At stated times during the year, fruit and vegetables had to be canned or dried, and candles had to be dipped. In addition to the spinning and weaving, feathers had to be picked from live geese and ducks for pillows and feather

³ W. H. Venable, *A Buckeye Boyhood* (Cincinnati, 1911), 10-5, 22-5.

beds.⁴ Satisfactory female help was often difficult to obtain, as girls commonly married at an early age. The more capable the help, moreover, the less could it be counted on for long service.

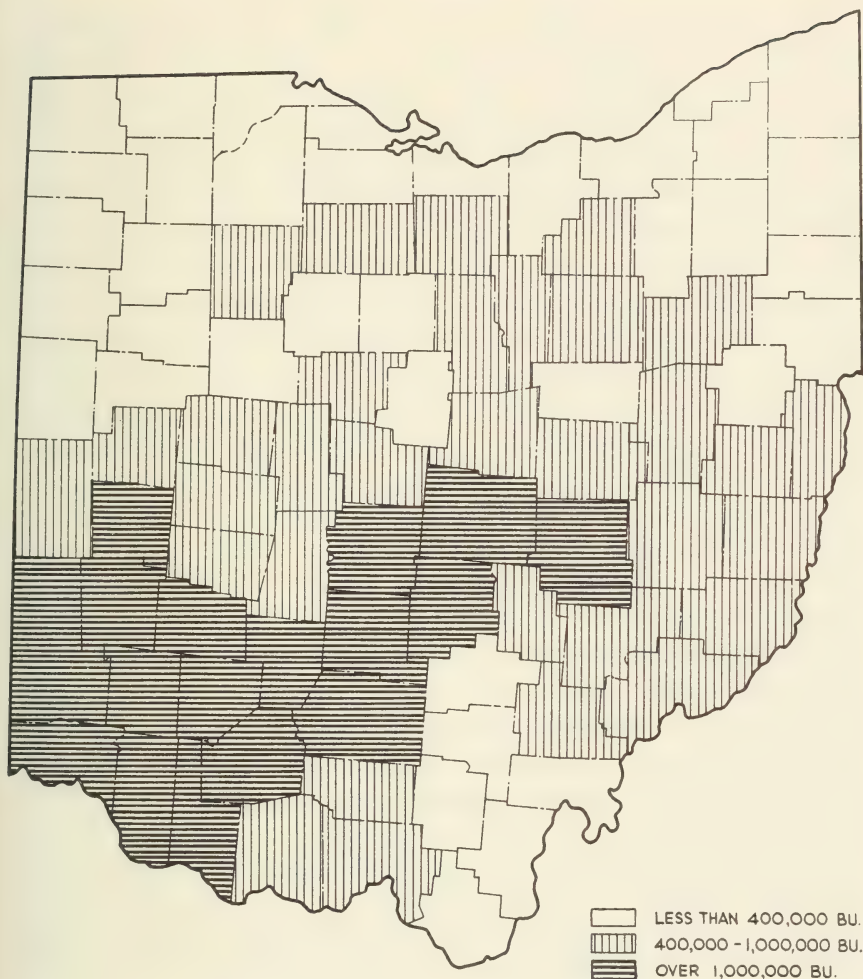
By 1850, the average Ohio farm consisted of one hundred twenty-five acres, valued at about \$2,495. Almost ten million acres in the State had felt the transforming hand of the pioneer, but over eight million acres of farm land were yet unimproved. In a fairly typical county (Erie), land-owners were classified as follows: 164 with 10 to 50 acres; 381 with 50 to 100 acres; 491 with 100 to 500 acres; 16 with 500 to 1,000 acres; and three with 1,000 to 10,000 acres.

Corn was the principal crop (in the number of bushels produced) as it had been with the Indian when he occupied the Ohio country. In 1851, the highly esteemed *Hunt's Merchants' Magazine* published in New York, carried an article entitled "Ohio: The Land of Wheat and Corn."⁵ In 1840, Ohio ranked third among the states in the number of bushels of corn produced. Surpassed only by Tennessee and Kentucky, it had a yield of 33,668,144 bushels for the year 1839. Ten years later, the corn crop had practically doubled, with a production of 59,078,695 bushels.

In preparing the ground for corn-planting in the 1820's, the primitive wooden plow with iron points was commonly used. The children on the farm frequently placed the seed, which was planted by hand, with several sturdy helpers following to cover it. In early years some of the seed corn was secured from the Indians or from the East. The earliest varieties of an improved type were doubtless the Hackberry and the Gourdseed. The hoeing and "hilling up" of the corn was the special work of the boys and sometimes of the girls, but quite commonly one harrowing and two plowings constituted the only cultivation which the crop received. When harvest time came the burrs and weeds in the field would be from four to eight feet in height. Some one had to go up and

⁴ Martin Welker, *Farm Life in Central Ohio Sixty Years Ago* (Wooster, O., 1892), 35-7.

⁵ (New York), XXIV (1851), 617-8.



MAP 5. INDIAN CORN PRODUCTION IN OHIO, 1849

Based upon census returns in J. D. B. DeBow, *Statistical View of the United States* (Washington, 1854).

down between the rows, knocking away the burrs and breaking the wild vines which almost concealed the crop. Under such conditions only thirty-five to forty bushels an acre were produced on the rich bottom-lands of the Miami Valley.

In 1827, however, Christopher Leaming, a farmer of near Madisonville in the Miami Valley, decided to experiment with certain ideas of corn improvement. With his three sons he plowed deeper by two or three inches than the prevailing custom dictated, and as the corn developed, he took pains to eliminate all the weeds. His harvest on a ten-acre plot averaged 104 bushels to the acre, a yield that at once caused his methods to be emulated throughout the district. During the same period in areas settled by New Englanders, the Yankee custom of planting pumpkins between the rows of corn was widely followed. In the early pioneer period, ears were commonly pulled in the field, and the stalks left standing, for the fodder was not utilized. Virginians in the area west of the Scioto River, however, followed the practise of their native state in cutting the corn and by 1850, this practise had become common throughout Ohio. The husking of the corn was a social occasion for the countryside and was usually followed by a dance in the farmer's barn. Where tenant farming prevailed, the landlord's share was often cut and the rest (two-thirds of the crop) allowed to stand. The tenant's share would be husked in the fields.⁶

By 1850, Ohio ranked first among the states in the production of corn. Franklin, Pickaway, and Ross counties in the central part of the Scioto Valley led the State. Here, in some of the bottom lands, corn had been produced without rotation for as long as four decades. The Miami Valley, however, was becoming increasingly important as a corn-raising area, and a considerable crop was grown in the Sandusky Valley. The relatively new farms of northwestern Ohio produced little corn, while the hill counties of the southeastern part did somewhat better.⁷ In 1849, corn in the northern counties of Ohio sold for from thirty-three to forty-four cents a bushel and in the southern counties for from twenty to twenty-four cents a bushel. A tremendous amount, both on the ear and shelled, was shipped by boats from the river ports.⁸

⁶ W. A. Lloyd, J. I. Falconer, and C. E. Thorne, *Agriculture of Ohio* (Wooster O., 1918), 48-50.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 117-20.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 50; A. L. Kohlmeier, *Old Northwest* (Bloomington, Ind., 1938), 93.

Though more corn than wheat was produced each year, the price received per bushel for wheat was considerably larger. In 1849, in some counties of northern Ohio wheat sold for a dollar a bushel, but in some southern counties for only sixty-five cents; in both cases the selling price of wheat was much more than twice that of corn in the same locality.⁹ The Census of 1840 indicated that sixteen million bushels of wheat had been harvested in Ohio in 1839. At that time Ohio ranked first among the states of the Union in wheat production. The census returns for 1850 (covering the year 1849) placed Ohio second among the wheat-producing states of the Union. *Hunt's Merchants' Magazine*, however, stated that the census returns did not indicate the total amount of wheat produced in the State, that two or three counties alone produced over a million bushels annually, and that the actual annual yield in Ohio was about thirty million bushels.¹⁰

In the decades of the 1830's and 1840's the back-bone counties (south of the Western Reserve) enjoyed an enviable reputation as a wheat-growing region. Stark, Wayne, Holmes, Ashland and Richland were especially fertile, and this wheat belt extended as far as twenty-five miles south of the National Road. By 1850, moreover, some of the former corn lands of the Miami country were being turned to wheat production and that part of the State was becoming another great wheat-producing section.¹¹ Probably the favorite varieties of wheat around 1825 were Red Chaff Bearded and Red Blue Stream; thereafter, Mediterranean became popular. In newly settled areas, after a few seasons of corn or other crops, wheat was often scattered in a field among the stumps. Harrowing with the use of a triangular wooden or iron-toothed harrow followed, a mattock often being used around trees and stumps. Fungus was prevalent and often damaged much of the crop.

In time farm machinery became less elementary, yet in 1850

⁹ *Ibid.*, 93.

¹⁰ XXIV, 617-8.

¹¹ Lloyd, Falconer, and Thorne, *Agriculture*, 129.



MAP 6. WHEAT PRODUCTION IN OHIO, 1849

Based upon census returns in J. D. B. DeBow, *Statistical View of the United States* (Washington, 1854).

its average value on the 143,807 farms of the State was only \$88. By 1850 a few farmers in Ohio were experimenting with seeders. At harvest time cooperative efforts (as in the case of corn-husking) made for some social gaiety. By 1825 the cradle had generally

supplanted the sickle as a harvesting device. An acre had been the normal daily coverage for a man with a sickle, but with the cradle he might cut three or four acres of grain. Ingenious individuals experimented with more advanced labor-saving devices. A reaper to cut grain was the aim of Obed Hussey, a Yankee living at Cincinnati, in the early 1830's. He completed such a machine in time for the harvest of 1833. Early in July of that year a public demonstration took place near Carthage, in the Cincinnati vicinity, before the Hamilton County Agricultural Society. Several unessential improvements were soon made, and a patent was issued on the last day of 1833. Wide interest naturally developed in the machine. In the meanwhile, in Virginia, Cyrus Hall McCormick was also experimenting with labor-saving farm machinery. In respect to time Hussey had a right to claim priority, but the Hussey machine was one resembling the modern mower while the one devised by McCormick had features which entitled it to a place as an early type of reaper. During the years from 1839 to 1847 a struggle developed between the contenders for superiority and priority in this field. After 1837, local contractors in Ohio—in Hamilton, Champaign, Jefferson, and Stark counties—manufactured the Hussey machines. Similarly, by 1845, McCormick was having machines manufactured at Cincinnati. During the next few years some were produced by subcontractors within the State, an arrangement not always tending to maintain quality. Thus, by 1851, a relatively few of both the McCormick and Hussey machines were in use, somewhat experimentally, in Ohio.¹²

Part of every winter season on the average Ohio farm was devoted to threshing. At the beginning of the period the flail was employed, but as time went on, horses and cattle were more generally utilized for treading out the grain. Sometimes barn floors were used; at other times threshing-floors of boards, movable from place to place, or hard clay surfaces out-of-doors were utilized. Two rows of sheaves were placed in a circle, and then from two to eight horses were driven round and round at a trot until the task

¹² W. T. Hutchinson, *Cyrus H. McCormick: Seed-time* (New York, 1930), 150ff.

had been accomplished. Often a fan-mill was operated to winnow away the chaff.¹³ Threshing-machines began to be devised at a fairly early period as a means of lightening labor. Thus, in 1828, it was announced that Peter Barker of Worthington had invented such a thresher, to be worked by a man and two boys. Numerous testimonials were submitted as to the practicability of the invention, and orders were solicited for delivery upon completion. Early threshing-machines were of the stationary type, but by 1850 portable machines—combination thresher-separators—had been introduced. Horse power, employing either a sweep or a treadmill, was utilized.¹⁴

Oats also constituted a leading crop. In 1849, its production was slightly under that of 1839, when over fourteen million bushels had been produced. Farmers who had come from Pennsylvania especially prized oats as feed for horses. Like other grains, in the early years it was threshed with a wooden flail and cleaned with a sheet, two men swinging the sheet so as to blow the chaff from the grain as it was slowly poured out of the half bushel by another hand.¹⁵

Before 1850, rye was relatively of greater significance as an Ohio crop than in later decades. In 1849, the crop of about 426,000 bushels was only a little over half the yield of 1839. Like corn, rye was supposed to be better suited to virgin soil than wheat. Some of the early inhabitants preferred rye bread, but the chief reason for the production of the crop was the excellent quality of whiskey which could be made from it. Buckwheat also was considered especially suited to new land. It was generally raised for home use, especially on the Western Reserve where buckwheat cakes were popular in the breakfast menu of the transplanted New Englander. The crop for 1849 in Ohio was slightly larger than ten years before, in each case over 633,000 bushels. The barley produced in 1849 (over 354,000 bushels) represented about a two-thirds in-

¹³ Venable, *Buckeye Boyhood*, 94.

¹⁴ Delaware (Ohio) *Patron*, April 17, 1828; Lloyd, Falconer, and Thorne, *Agriculture*, 231.

¹⁵ Welker, *Farm Life in Central Ohio*, 14.

crease over the crop of ten years before. This crop was becoming more important as Cincinnati developed as a brewing center. Hay—mostly of the timothy and wild varieties—was grown in Ohio, especially in the west central part (Greene, Champaign, and Madison counties). A fair amount of timothy was also produced on the Western Reserve. In 1849, 1,443,142 tons of hay, as compared with 1,022,037 tons in 1839, were harvested. Not much clover was grown in Ohio before 1850.

Tobacco came to Ohio both from the region east of the Hudson and from south of the Ohio River. At first it was cultivated only for family needs, but on the Western Reserve—particularly in Ash-tabula County—the women of the household sometimes made the surplus into cigars and bartered them at the cross-roads stores for groceries. Tobacco was first introduced into the counties of eastern Ohio near the Ohio River in the vicinity of Belmont and Washington and gradually spread westward to adjoining counties. Pioneers from Kentucky brought it into the southwestern section, especially Hamilton and Montgomery counties. A fire-cure was used, and the product was then packed in hogsheads for shipment to Baltimore. By 1850 it had become a leading product of much of southern and eastern Ohio.¹⁶ In that year 10,454,449 pounds were recorded by the census-takers, in contrast with 5,942,275 ten years before.

Experiments were made in Ohio, with some small success, in the production of cotton and rice, and in the cultivation of silkworms. In 1833, Daniel Roe of Dayton manufactured a silk handkerchief from silk produced by worms of his own raising. The kerchief was declared to be "a substantial, well made article, not so fine, perhaps, as the foreign fabric, but quite as serviceable, and handsome enough for the use of any person."¹⁷ But the number of pounds of cocoons raised in Ohio decreased from 4,317 in 1839 to 1,552 in 1849.¹⁸

¹⁶ Lloyd, Falconer, and Thorne, *Agriculture*, 60.

¹⁷ *Ohio State Journal*, Jan. 26, 1833.

¹⁸ J. D. B. De Bow, *Statistical View of the U. S.* (Washington, 1854), 174.

Hops were grown in almost every garden chiefly for home use, with a small surplus for the market, especially in the northern counties of the State. Also for home use was the large quantity of flax raised in Ohio before 1850. Combined with wool it was known as "linsey-woolsey" utilized by the women of a household in producing wearing apparel for the men of the family. A number of mills in Ohio produced linseed oil and some few used castor-beans to produce castor-oil. Some hemp was also grown, especially near Marietta, where ship-building was carried on, and to a lesser degree in the lowlands of the Scioto and Miami valleys. Apparently Irish settlers were principally interested in its cultivation; but the Ohio legislature exhibited an interest in the possibilities of the crop in Ohio, and in 1829 authorized the governor to obtain the best information as to its growth and preparation for market. Much labor by hand, however, was necessary for its production, and this factor made its cultivation unprofitable in Ohio in competition with the slave labor of Kentucky.¹⁹ In the State during the late 'thirties and the 'forties the production of Irish and sweet potatoes was fairly constant, the average production being between five and six million bushels.

Before 1825, the common fruits—apples, peaches, plums, pears, cherries, and grapes—were raised in Ohio in considerable quantities.²⁰ The activities of horticulturists made four localities important centers of fruit cultivation—Poland in Mahoning County and Bridgeport, Marietta, and Cincinnati, in Belmont, Washington, and Hamilton counties respectively. In the development of fruit production in Ohio, Nicholas Longworth who had located at Cincinnati in about 1803 was a pioneer. He imported countless varieties of European grapes but found none commercially successful except the native Catawba. In 1828 he retired from the profession of law and began to specialize in the production of grapes and the manufacture of wine. Vineyards on the hillsides of Hamilton and Clermont counties were cultivated on a 50-50 basis by Longworth

¹⁹ *Ohio State Journal*, Dec. 9, 1829; Lloyd, Falconer, and Thorne, *Agriculture*, 55.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 56-9.

and his tenants. Some farmers, however, soon began to operate on an independent basis. Longworth's choice Catawba and Isabella wines took prizes at many agricultural fairs. In 1850 the vineyards of Thomas H. Yeatman near Cincinnati yielded four thousand gallons of wine which had the character of "dry Hock," from which the finest sparkling champagne was made, vying "successfully with the most favored brands of Europe."²¹ It was confidently prophesied that the valley would soon be known as "the Rhine of America."²² But, unfortunately a rot soon began to appear, impeding the further development of the promising industry.

Longworth also was of great importance in the development of strawberry cultivation in Ohio. About 1840, no strawberry growers around Cincinnati enjoyed much success except one Abergust, a German from Philadelphia. Longworth learned from Abergust's son what had hitherto been a carefully guarded secret, that a difference existed between the pistillate and staminate varieties. It became apparent that most of Longworth's plants were male and that success could only be obtained by the interplanting of the pistillates and staminate. The result of the dissemination of this information was that strawberries which had previously been an unusual and costly luxury became a common table delicacy. In 1846, it was estimated that various growers disposed of nine thousand bushels in Cincinnati.²³ Longworth was also responsible for the introduction of the Ohio Everbearing Black Raspberry.²⁴

A considerable portion of the wealth of Ohio was of course in its animal life. In the early years especially, much of this was of the fur-bearing kind, and coon-hunting in some sections proved to be a very profitable occupation. Thus, along the Maumee River, for many years around 1835, coon skins were generally accepted for payment in all commercial transactions at the rate of a dollar for each prime skin and fifty cents for each one of inferior quality. In

²¹ *Merchants' Magazine*, XXIV, 106.

²² Charles Cist, *Cincinnati in 1851* (Cincinnati, 1851), 266.

²³ *Merchants' Magazine*, XVII (1847), 326.

²⁴ *Dictionary of American Biography*, ed. by Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone (New York, 1928-1937), XI, 392-3.

the village of Defiance, at the end of a good season, a large warehouse would be filled with the skins, and several men would be employed for two or three months to prepare them for the eastern market. The annual value of the shipments of pelts from that one community alone was perhaps \$25,000, an amount sufficient to be extremely important in the economic life of the locality.²⁵

As the years passed, draft animals and those producing meat, milk, and wool became increasingly important. In 1825, taxation returns indicated 138,074 horses and 274,693 head of cattle in the State. A quarter of a century witnessed a tremendous increase in the number of both. The census reports for 1850 gave the following statistics for Ohio:

Horses	Asses and Mules	Swine	Milch Cows	Working Oxen	Other Cattle	Sheep
463,397	3,423	1,964,770	544,499	65,381	749,067	3,942,929

Swine formed an important part of the Ohio farmer's interest. The original types found in the State were the "razor-back" hogs, which lived in the woods in rather wild fashion, subsisting on acorns, beech nuts, and other food which nature provided. By 1825, this diet was sometimes supplemented by feedings of corn. Just before winter set in those hogs which were to be marketed were driven over the mountains to Baltimore or other eastern cities. Some were also driven to Detroit or shipped by the Lake to Montreal or Quebec. By 1825, moreover, the packing of pork in Ohio cities had become important. By 1834, the Miami Valley hog, the progenitor of the Poland-China breed, had been developed.²⁶

The cattle raised in Ohio in 1825 were of very poor quality. They were useful of course for three purposes: labor, milk, and meat. The steers were obviously preferred for the first of these, but cows were also employed in the fields on occasion. On the Western Reserve two native breeds were found, the brindles, which were acceptable milkers, and the yellows.²⁷ East of the Scioto Valley, in

²⁵ Edwin Phelps, "Reminiscences," *Defiance Express*, Feb. 3, 1887.

²⁶ Lloyd, Falconer, and Thorne, *Agriculture*, 68.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 61-2.

the Hocking region, were the Hocking or hill cattle, a hardy, healthy type but too small for the beef market. West of the Scioto River, in the vicinity of Adams and Highland counties, were the Brush Creek cattle, slightly larger than the hill type. These were "healthy, hardy and easily fattened, and their general good qualities almost made up for their inferior size." To the north of the Brush Creek district, in Fayette, Madison, and parts of Clark and Champaign counties were the Barren cattle, larger than those of Brush Creek, but "looser made, harder to fatten, and very subject to disease. Indeed, their better size was almost their only recommendation." The Scioto Valley counties had a conglomerate mixture of breeds ranging from common scrubs to full-blooded Pattons.²⁸ The latter were of a stock introduced into Ross County in 1800 by John Patton, a settler from Kentucky. These cattle were descendants of those imported into Maryland in 1773 and were excellent beef producers, some of them weighing 3,000 pounds. Some Patton stock, as well as Sanders Shorthorns, were found in both the Scioto and Miami valleys, and as early as 1803, improved stock had been introduced in the Western Reserve. In general, Ohio did not have blooded cattle to the extent that Kentucky did, because the Blue Grass area of the latter state was especially favorable for such a development. Ohio on the other hand was a State of diversified interests, not only in the field of industry but also in that of agriculture.

Individual farmers had obtained some improved stock before 1830, but a general interest in raising better cattle did not develop in Ohio until about 1833. At that time in the Scioto Valley, Felix Renick, a native of Virginia, who had definitely settled in the valley in 1801, and his brother George stimulated a movement for importing select cattle from England. Late in 1833, forty-eight men (forty-six from Ohio) formed at Chillicothe the "Ohio Company for Importing English Cattle." Ex-governors Allen Trimble and Duncan McArthur were among the stockholders. Felix Renick

²⁸ William Renick, *Memoirs, Correspondence, and Reminiscences* (Circleville, Ohio, 1880), 55-6.

was commissioned by the company to journey to England to purchase some of the finest improved cattle to be found there. Sailing with two assistants in January, 1834, he made a careful selection of nineteen head (seven bulls and twelve cows) of pedigreed Short-horns, which were shipped to America. After being landed in Philadelphia, they were driven overland to Chillicothe, where they arrived in good condition in October. During the next two years, additional consignments were secured from England. In October, 1836, an auction was held of this imported stock at the Renick farm south of Chillicothe, the most epoch-making cattle sale ever held in the United States up to that time. Forty-three animals sold at this auction brought an average price of \$803.25, the highest price being \$2,225 paid for a roan female, Teeswater. The next year another sale resulted in an average price of \$1,071.65 being paid for fifteen animals, the bull Comet Halley selling for \$2,500. The displays of beautiful cattle at the county fairs were creating a popular demand for blooded stock.²⁹

As far back at 1808 the Scioto Valley had furnished cattle for the eastern markets. By 1825, about 15,000 head were being driven over the mountains annually, a procedure that continued until the railroads ended it about 1850. The great cattle-feeding period in the Scioto Valley, when the animals were fattened for the long drive eastward, was from 1840 to 1850. At that time the best grades of cattle were fed ten to twenty bushels of corn during March and April when they were three years old, and the inferior grades were similarly fed when they were four years old. Then they were allowed to graze through the summer and fall, and during the four to five and a half months of winter were fed all the corn that they could eat, about a half bushel a day. Cattle fattened on grass were sent over the mountains chiefly during the fall and in rather limited numbers. The great bulk of the corn-fed cattle of the West, however, was driven eastward so as to arrive there between April 15, and August 1. Practically no cattle arrived in the East from Ohio during the time from the first snowfall until

²⁹ C. S. Plumb, "Felix Renick, Pioneer," *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, XXXIII, 3-66.

April 15. Nine-tenths of the corn-fed cattle of the West came from Ohio and Kentucky, chiefly the former. Some raised in Indiana and Illinois were driven to Ohio where the long journey was broken and the animals were fattened for the eastern purchasers who awaited their arrival at the seaboard towns. New York City was the favorite destination, but some were sold even in southern cities.³⁰

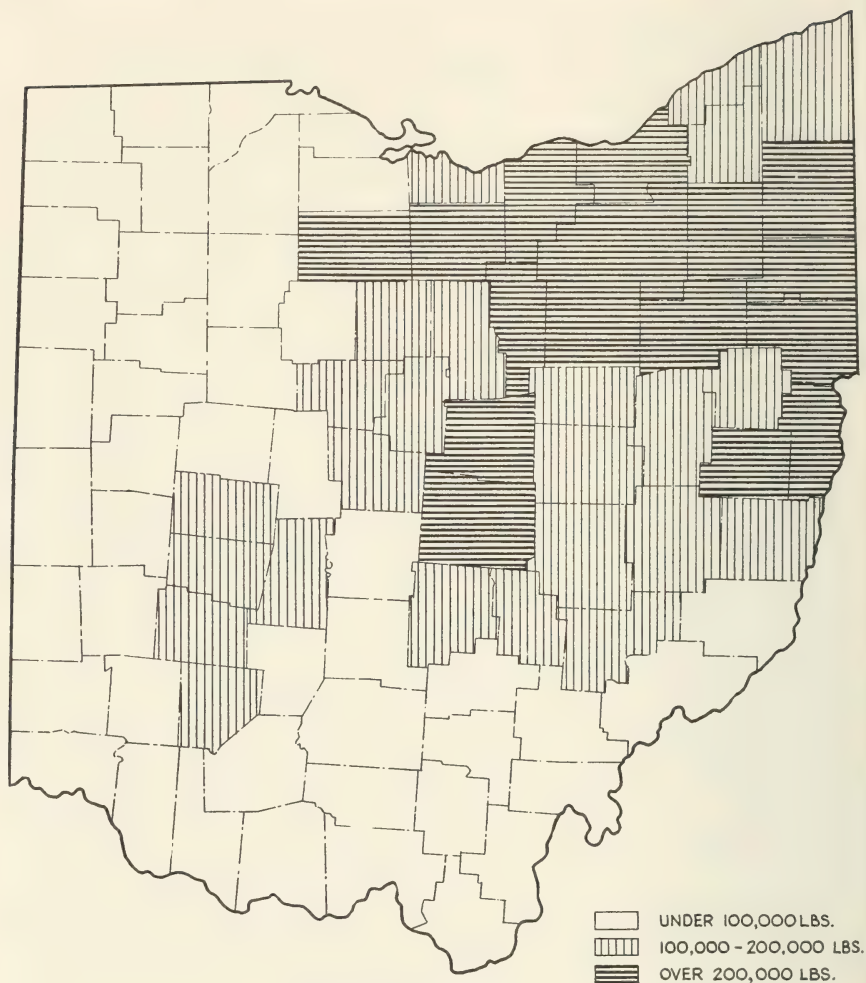
Cows were also important as producers of dairy products. The Western Reserve, indeed, enjoyed such a wide and important trade in these commodities that it was popularly known as "Cheesedom." Before 1850, butter and cheese were not prepared in creameries or other factories but on the farms, where the output for 1849 in Ohio amounted to over thirty-four million pounds of butter and to over twenty million pounds of cheese. Women performed a large part of this work and of that involved in the raising of chickens, which often sold very cheaply. Chickens at fifty to seventy-five cents a dozen and eggs at perhaps five cents a dozen were commonly offered for sale.³¹

Ohioans were much interested in the raising of sheep, not only for the mutton but for the wool. Considerable quantities were sheared annually on the meadows of the Western Reserve, but the counties south of the Reserve and north of the National Road were particularly outstanding in this respect. The whole northeastern quarter of Ohio was a great wool-producing area, but in 1849, Belmont, Licking, Jefferson, Columbiana, Medina, Harrison, Portage, Mahoning, Stark, and Summit counties led, in the order named. Belmont County alone had over 135,000 sheep, and Ohio ranked first among the states in the production of wool.

To stimulate a greater interest in all matters relating to agriculture, the Ohio legislature in February, 1846, created the State Board of Agriculture. By the same law the legal status of county agricultural societies was officially recognized. For a time the State board, under the presidency of Allen Trimble, was chiefly inter-

³⁰ Renick, *Memoirs*, 14-5; Columbus *Ohio Statesman*, April 16, 1839.

³¹ De Bow, *Statistical View*, 173; Lloyd, Falconer, and Thorne, *Agriculture*, 68.



MAP 7. WOOL PRODUCTION IN OHIO, 1849

Based upon census returns in J. D. B. DeBow, *Statistical View of the United States* (Washington, 1854).

ested in the creation and successful operation of the county societies, which sponsored county fairs for the exhibition of "superior implements of husbandry, products of the soil, improved stock, and such manufactured articles as were the product of the domestic

industry of the county." In 1847, the State board endeavored to stimulate the holding of district fairs in designated districts of the State. The effort was but partially successful, only one such fair being held in 1847, at Wilmington. Yet, this fair was so well patronized that a second district fair was held in the southwestern district, at Xenia, in 1848. Successful beyond all expectation, the Xenia exhibition included entries of prize cattle from New York, which failed to secure first prizes in competition with Ohio blooded stock. The patronage extended to the two district fairs led the State board to plan a large State fair for 1849. Cincinnati, as the largest city, was selected for the purpose, but the outbreak of cholera caused a postponement until the fall of 1850, when the first Ohio State Fair was held at Camp Washington, two miles from the heart of Cincinnati. Another outbreak of cholera in July, 1850 (resulting in the death of one of the Executive Committee of the State board), the failure of complete cooperation from the citizens of Cincinnati, and the holding of simultaneous competitive exhibitions by the Cincinnati Horticultural Society and the Mechanics Association, were discouraging circumstances. The large crowds, the thorough cooperation of the railroads (which ran many excursion trains), the highly creditable exhibits, and the financial success of the undertaking, however, led to the holding of a second State fair at Franklinton (Columbus) in September, 1851. Thus, what became a well-established State institution had its beginnings.³²

The excellent forest trees in Ohio made timber easily available, and with the development of the canals and the furniture factories of Cincinnati some commercial value came to be attached to these gifts of nature. In some regions of Ohio during pioneer days about the only source of ready cash was from the "Black Salts" made from the ashes of burned hardwood trees. This potassium salt was valuable enough when sufficiently concentrated to permit incurring the high transportation costs to eastern markets. In the years after

³² M. T. Blake, "Origin and Early History of the Ohio State Fair," M. A. thesis, Ohio State University, 1939, Chapter I.

1825, a farmer in the present Lorain County might take his "Black Salts" to a near-by "ashery" where they were further concentrated into pearlash or potash. Then it might be taken to a trader at the mouth of Black River who would pay for it, one-third in cash and two-thirds in supplies. The money enabled the farmer to pay his taxes and to obtain salt, tea, and cotton goods which could only be secured by cash.³³

Another useful product obtained from the forest trees was maple-sugar. In 1840 in southern Ohio among the hills there were many uncleared woodlands with numerous maples which were utilized each spring for this purpose.³⁴ The principal center of such activity in Ohio, however, was Geauga County (on the Western Reserve) where 349,314 pounds of sugar and 2,000 gallons of molasses were produced in 1850.³⁵

Common salt of course was a necessity for the pioneer, and salt springs were early utilized for the securing of this commodity. In 1826, about 500,000 bushels were being produced annually in Ohio with three-fifths of this supply coming from Muskingum County and smaller quantities from Morgan, Jackson, and Gallia counties. At that time much salt was brought from the salt-works of Pennsylvania and western Virginia to southern Ohio and from New York State to northern Ohio. In 1850, Ohio ranked fourth among the states in the number of plants, in the number of employees (167), in the capital of the plants, and in the quantity and value of the product.

Salt-works were not the only industrial establishments erected in pioneer days in Ohio. Whenever a considerable number of people moved into a neighborhood certain services became almost imperative in the immediate locality, and enterprising individuals attempted to secure a share in the larger monetary returns of manu-

³³ R. B. Frost, "Lorain, Ohio: A Study in Urban Geography," *Ohio Journal of Science* (Columbus), XXXV (1935), 157.

³⁴ J. S. Buckingham, *Eastern and Western States of America* (London, 1842), II, 333.

³⁵ Historical Society of Geauga County, *Pioneer and General History of Geauga County* (1880), 33.

facturing as compared with agriculture. In a fairly well-settled rural district, grist- and sawmills were erected along suitable streams, and shoe shops, blacksmiths' shops, asheries, stave factories, brick-yards, tanneries, and grindstone factories were not uncommon.³⁶ An intelligent and enterprising person with some capital might become a local capitalist of considerable importance. Thus, Giles Richards, a brother-in-law of Amos A. Lawrence of Massachusetts, operated a number of industries from 1822 to 1835 at Colerain, a small village sixteen miles northwest of Cincinnati. These included a cotton-mill, a flour-mill, a fulling and carding establishment, and a sawmill, as well as a store, a tavern, and a dye house. In those days the cotton- or woolen-mills of the Ohio countryside were generally rambling structures of wood with windows sufficient to admit light and air. Farmers took the wool from their own sheep to the village mill to be twisted into yarn and perhaps made into cloth. In the case of cotton, the raw product could be purchased in Cincinnati and then taken to the mill which was operated by water-power.³⁷ Water-power sites were frequently chosen for such pioneering efforts. Thus, in the years after 1825 Mill Creek, in the vicinity of Youngstown, was utilized to run grist-mills, woolen factories, sawmills, and a blast-furnace.

Other early industrial activities, besides salt-works, were established because of certain natural deposits in the vicinity. Thus, in 1826, "decomposable pyrites" found near Chillicothe and in the neighborhood of Steubenville were manufactured into large quantities of copperas, and by the late 'forties there were seven copperas establishments in the vicinity of the latter city. Similarly, the gypsum of the Sandusky Bay region and the limestone of northern Ohio were exploited commercially. Many buildings of importance in and around Sandusky were built with limestone from that vicinity, and quarries at Berea near Cleveland were developed.³⁸ The sandstone of southern Ohio was readily cut into blocks and

³⁶ Frost, "Lorain, Ohio," 156.

³⁷ O. D. Smith, *Life and Times of Giles Richards* (Columbus, 1936), 17-20, 23-5.

³⁸ Benjamin Drake and E. D. Mansfield, *Cincinnati in 1826* (Cincinnati, 1826), 11, 12.

was likewise used for important buildings. In 1840, one traveler recorded: "On the eastern bank of the [Scioto] River, only five miles above the town of Columbus, is a large quarry of fine gray marble, capable of receiving a high polish; and within a few miles further, are quarries of sandstone, out of which, several of the public edifices are built."³⁹

Brick had been manufactured in southern Ohio since territorial days, and the industry had become an important one throughout the State during the following decades. In some localities the presence of suitable clays had led to the establishment of potteries for the making of such products as earthenware and stoneware. The vicinity of Zanesville was especially important in the ceramic industry. In 1840, of ninety-nine potteries in the State, twenty-two were located in Muskingum County. Often small plants were operated by farmers who were engaged in other pursuits at the same time. In 1840, an Englishman, James Bennett, began the production of yellow ware at East Liverpool, which became one of the chief ceramic centers in the country.⁴⁰ By 1830, Zanesville had also developed a considerable interest in the manufacture of window glass and bottles.⁴¹

It had been known, even before 1825, that bituminous coal existed in considerable quantities in the valleys of the Hocking and Muskingum rivers and along the Ohio River above the mouth of the Scioto.⁴² An early figure in this field was Valentine Baxter Horton, a Vermonter who had settled in Cincinnati. He became interested in the coal deposits of Ohio and carried samples to Boston where he secured the support of friends for his venture. In 1835 he located in Nyesville, Ohio, which he renamed Pomeroy—his wife's maiden name. Soon Horton and others had mined about a thousand bushels of coal. Later a company to engage in

³⁹ Buckingham, *Eastern and Western States*, II, 302.

⁴⁰ Wilber Stout, "History of the Clay Industry in Ohio," Ohio Geological Survey, Fourth Series, *Bulletin* 26 (Columbus, 1923), 7-102.

⁴¹ Karl Bernhard, Duke of Saxe-Weimar, *Travels through North America during the Years 1825 and 1826* (Philadelphia, 1828), II, 154.

⁴² Drake and Mansfield, *Cincinnati*, 11.

mining operations was formed, the coal being shipped down the river on rafts which could not return because of the swiftness of the current. New rafts were constructed for each journey until Horton began to employ towboats to pull the barges up-stream.⁴³ By 1848, 2,500,000 bushels were produced annually in Meigs County. In the Mahoning Valley, with the opening of the Pennsylvania and Ohio Canal, connecting the canals of western Pennsylvania with the Ohio Canal at Akron, David Tod, Civil War governor of Ohio, experimented in 1840 with the mining of coal in the Youngstown area. He sent a few boat-loads of the fuel to Cleveland, where it successfully passed the tests for steamboats and other purposes. By the late 'forties Tod was producing about a hundred tons of coal each day from his mines, and a smaller enterprise was turning out about sixty tons each day.⁴⁴

In pioneer days in Ohio, before the completion of the Erie Canal and the canal system of Ohio, the cost of transporting iron manufactures over the mountains was very great and stimulated iron production and manufacturing in the State. Even after the development of the canals, the opportunities for such industries west of the mountains were considerable. As early as 1820, seven counties (chiefly Muskingum, but also Adams, Licking, Columbiana, Portage, Stark and Trumbull) had witnessed developments in the production of cast iron, pig iron, and bar iron. By 1826, Muskingum County alone produced annually about 1,300 tons of metal and about 200 tons of bar iron. The iron ore, all of the bog variety, was locally considered as "rich and of good quality"; it was apparently present in "inexhaustible quantities" in Adams, Muskingum, Licking, Geauga, and Columbiana counties.⁴⁵ Hence, furnaces developed in many localities. The correspondence of Duncan McArthur, before and after he became governor in 1830, shows a considerable investment in this type of activity in southern Ohio.⁴⁶

⁴³ *Dict. Amer. Biog.*, IX, 238-9.

⁴⁴ *Historical Collections of the Mahoning Valley* (Youngstown, O., 1876), I, 27-8.

⁴⁵ Drake and Mansfield, *Cincinnati*, 11.

⁴⁶ McArthur MSS. (in Library of Congress).

The opening of the Erie Canal encouraged ironmaking in the Lake region of Ohio for the New York market. The bog-ore found there produced a very tough metal suitable for castings, hence a ready market for the product was obtained at the stove and hollow-ware foundries of the upper Hudson Valley.⁴⁷ In 1841, the Geauga furnace near Painesville was an important industry of that vicinity.

Before the Civil War, and especially before 1850, the iron industry in Ohio was dependent largely upon charcoal rather than the bituminous mines. The so-called Hanging Rock Iron District, embracing about five hundred square miles of land in Kentucky and approximately 1,290 square miles in Ohio in parts of Lawrence, Scioto, Gallia, Jackson, Vinton, and Hocking counties, became a nationally-known region for iron production. The first of these charcoal-furnaces to be erected in this region of Ohio was the Union furnace in Lawrence County (1826). The most noteworthy charcoal-furnace in this region was Hecla, in Lawrence County, established in 1833. Its supervisor was the capable ironmaster, John Campbell. Vesuvius furnace, erected also in Lawrence County, in 1833, was distinguished for the introduction of the hot-blast process to replace the cold-air method for smelting. Pine Grove furnace, erected in Lawrence County (1828), abolished Sunday work in 1844 so successfully that other furnaces did likewise. In each of the furnaces erected before 1840, about one hundred men and fifty yoke of oxen were considered necessary for successful operation. A variety of tasks required the attention of the workmen—the erection and repair of the furnace, the chopping down of the trees and the preparation of the charcoal, the mining of the ore and of the limestone used in the smelting, the hauling of these to the furnace, the smelting process, and the transportation of the iron (usually by oxen) to a river port or to a near-by market. By 1849, there were twenty-two furnaces (seventeen hot-blast and five cold-blast) in the Hanging Rock region of Ohio. Nine were at Hanging Rock, six at Wheelersburg, four at Franklin, and three

⁴⁷ V. S. Clark, *History of Manufactures in the U. S.* (New York, 1929), I, 347.

at Gallipolis.⁴⁸ Needless to say, this industry was of tremendous significance in the economic life of the area until well after the Civil War.⁴⁹

In the Mahoning Valley, a charcoal blast-furnace, which was in operation in 1838, lasted only a few years. It was not a financial success. Many similar attempts brought pecuniary losses to the adventurous individuals who engaged in them. About 1846, however, it was found that the so-called block coal from the valley could be used in the reduction of iron ore, and during that year the first blast-furnace of that type in the Youngstown vicinity was constructed. By 1847, there were four furnaces in the northeastern part of Mahoning County using raw coal alone (two at Youngstown, one at Lowell, and one at Mill Creek). These proved to be prodigiously successful, for ores previously deemed harsh because of the siliceous content, were easily reduced by the concentrated heat and blast of the coal. The problem of securing an adequate timber supply and the devastation of the near-by woodlands were, moreover, avoided.⁵⁰ Thus, we note the beginnings of the activity in the Mahoning Valley that transformed it by the latter part of the century into a veritable hive of iron and steel production.

During the era of the charcoal-furnace, many local forges were in operation, generally utilizing pig iron from the furnace and hammering it into such bars, rods, or plates as might be needed. Most of these forges were found in the iron region of the State, a belt extending on the Ohio River—from Gallipolis to Ripley—northward to Lake Erie—from Lorain to Conneaut. Until 1830, water-power was commonly employed, but thereafter steam came into fairly general use. Before 1850 the forges were generally being supplanted by the more modern rolling-mills.⁵¹

⁴⁸ *Merchants' Magazine*, XXI (1849), 130.

⁴⁹ Wilber Stout, "Charcoal Iron Industry of the Hanging Rock Iron District," *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, XLII (1933), 72-104; V. D. Keeler, "Economic History of Jackson County Iron Industry," *ibid.*, 133-238.

⁵⁰ Charles Whittlesey, "Coal and Iron Trade of the Ohio Valley," *Merchants' Magazine*, XVI (1847), 450, 630.

⁵¹ Wilber Stout, "Early Forges in Ohio," *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, XLVI (1937), 25-41.

By 1849, much the largest part of the metal produced in the furnaces of the Hanging Rock region was being sent down the river to Cincinnati. Of the 56,000 tons produced in that area (in both Kentucky and Ohio) annually, about 22,000 tons valued at \$600,000, were being used by the foundries of Cincinnati.⁵² In 1850, Ohio ranked second among the states in the production of pig iron, using 140,610 tons of ore and employing 2,415 men. The State ranked third in the manufacture of iron castings, using 37,555 tons of pig iron and employing 2,758 men. In the production of wrought iron, Ohio ranked far down in the list of states, with only six establishments employing 276 persons.⁵³

Iron manufacturing was of course but one aspect of the industrial development in Ohio. Especially before 1840, there was much local manufacturing to meet the needs of the immediate vicinity. This may be illustrated by the experience of the village of Granville, in Licking County. There manufacturing establishments, like an iron-furnace and a flour-mill, had been in operation before 1825. Tin articles made from metal brought from Canada were also produced. Then came a factory specializing in old-fashioned open kitchen clocks, selling at first for \$15. A hat factory (1828), a cast-iron plow-works (1831), a cheese factory (1833), a furniture establishment (1835), and shops producing brushes, boots, shoes, candy, rope, began operations.⁵⁴

Factory operations on a large scale, however, were centered in the counties with the populous cities. In 1840 these were: Hamilton (Cincinnati); Summit (Akron); Montgomery (Dayton); Franklin (Columbus); Muskingum (Zanesville); Columbiana (East Liverpool); Licking (Newark); and Stark (Canton). Cleveland had not yet become important industrially. The first coal, brought to the city by canal in 1827, had caused the skeptical to question the possibility of "black stones being made to burn."⁵⁵

⁵² *Merchants' Magazine*, XXI, 130.

⁵³ De Bow, *Statistical View*, 181-2.

⁵⁴ Henry Bushnell, *History of Granville, Licking County, Ohio* (Columbus, 1889) 280ff.

⁵⁵ C. A. Urann, *Centennial History of Cleveland* (Cleveland, 1896), 53.

Bog-iron ore was found in the western part of the county and by 1850 was being used to some extent. Cleveland's industrial status before 1850 is commented on in the *Ohio Gazetteer* for 1841: "Manufacturing is not carried on extensively; there are, however, 2 steam engine shops, 1 iron foundry, 1 sash factory, 1 brewery, 1 steam flouring mill, capable of making 120 barrels of flour daily, 1 chair factory, 3 cabinet shops, etc., etc."⁵⁶ In other words the Industrial Revolution by 1850 had only lightly penetrated most of the Western Reserve. During the previous quarter-century, when New England itself was being veritably transformed by the rapid inroads of modern industrialism and of the Irish immigrant, this newer New England was still following, in the main, an agricultural life in which the foreign-born played little part. As Quebec was, in a sense, more like Old France than France itself, the Western Reserve was in some respects more like the land of the old-time Puritan than the region east of the Hudson.

An abundance of certain raw materials, other than mineral deposits, sometimes contributed to the importance of a manufacturing community. Thus, Steubenville, in close proximity to the wool-producing regions of eastern Ohio, early became one of the most important centers in the country for the manufacture of woolen cloth. Its relative significance in this respect declined as the years went by, but in 1846 there were five woolen-mills in the city. Sometimes, on the other hand, the mechanical ingenuity of certain individuals was a contributing factor in the industrial progress of a locality. Thus, James Leffel, a native of Virginia (1806) who settled at Springfield when he was a youth and the place a mere hamlet, designed, constructed and operated for some years a water-power sawmill on the Mad River just outside of Springfield. He established the first iron foundry in the neighborhood; produced a superior water-wheel; opened the first cotton-mill and machine shop in Springfield; and soon had patented a lever jack (1850) and two types of cook-stove (1852).⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Warren Jenkins, *Ohio Gazetteer* (Columbus, 1841), 126.

⁵⁷ *Dict. Amer. Biog.*, XI, 139-40.

The most important manufacturing section of the State before 1850 was unquestionably the Miami country of southwestern Ohio, where industrial development had attained considerable proportions even before 1820.⁵⁸ Among the numerous communities with considerable industries, Dayton was especially important. In 1840, in addition to its several cotton spinning factories, there was a large carpet factory, then temporarily idle, due to a lull in trade. Two gun-barrel and several agricultural implement manufactories were located there, as well as plants for making boot and shoe lasts, pegs, and the wooden part of plows. Flour-mills, distilleries, and a clock factory which turned out as many as three thousand clocks each year, were other industries which were aided by the abundance of water-power and the ease of shipment by canal. The cotton factories employed mostly boys and girls. By 1850, other industrial units there included five oil-mills which purchased from the neighboring farmers about 160,000 bushels of flax seed to be made into linseed oil; five foundries; and three paper-mills, which employed forty to fifty hands and manufactured about five hundred tons of paper annually.⁵⁹

Cincinnati was of course the great manufacturing center of the whole State and of the West. In 1840, of the \$16,905,257 capital invested in Ohio manufacturing, nearly half was in this city. Pork-packing was, by all calculations the chief aspect of this industrial development. In 1841, there were sixty-two beef and pork slaughterhouses and forty-eight pork-packing establishments, employing in all about 1,400 persons and producing annually over \$4,000,000 worth of goods. About 200,000 hogs were handled annually, enough pork, according to an ingenious calculation, "that if put into sausages of the ordinary diameter, it would make a girdle long enough to encompass the whole globe along the line of the equator."⁶⁰ In 1848, the number of hogs packed increased to 498,000, but in 1851, a decrease to 324,000 was noted. During the decade of

⁵⁸ F. P. Goodwin, "Rise of Manufactures in the Miami Country," *American Historical Review* (New York), XII (1907), 761-75.

⁵⁹ *Merchants' Magazine*, XXII (1850), 112.

⁶⁰ Buckingham, *Eastern and Western States*, II, 394.

the 'forties Cincinnati packed about twenty-seven per cent. of the meat products of the West, but already Louisville, St. Louis, and Chicago were arising as competitors in that field.⁶¹ In 1844, Cincinnati did about forty-three per cent. of all the pork-packing in Ohio and in 1851 about eighty per cent. of it. In the latter year one enthusiast exclaimed that the city was "the principal pork market in the United States, and without even the exceptions of Cork or Belfast, Ireland, the largest in the world."⁶²

Pork from Cincinnati was sold to the United States Navy, in the southern market and in New England; bacon was marketed in various localities and lard in Havana especially. Other allied products included lard-oil and stearine, the former being sold in part as a substance used to adulterate sperm-oil, and in France, olive-oil; the latter as a constituent of soap and candles. As early as 1826 there were eleven soap and candle factories in Cincinnati, producing annually 451,000 pounds of soap and 332,000 pounds of candles. In 1849 there were thirty large plants there for the manufacture of lard-oil. Additional allied products were glue and prussiate of potash, the latter used in New England factories for coloring purposes.⁶³

Cincinnati's importance as a meat-packing center began about 1833, but even then its industry had become well diversified. In 1826 the principal manufactures were "flour, distilled spirits, woolen and cotton goods, paper, copperas, linseed and castor oil, salt, castings, iron, steam engines, and a great variety of articles in wood, and the metals adapted to agriculture and the comforts of domestic life." One enterprising individual was making annually 1,500 pounds of high quality peppermint-oil. In respect to numbers of persons given employment the chief establishments were: 35 tailors' and clothiers' shops, 29 boot and shoe shops, 14 brick-yards, 3 steamboat-yards, 5 steam-engine establishments and 13 furniture factories. Some of these indicate Cincinnati's signifi-

⁶¹ Clark, *History of Manufactures*, I, 484.

⁶² Cist, *Cincinnati in 1851*, 278-9.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 285; *Merchants' Magazine*, XXI, 577.

cance as a commercial as well as an industrial city. In 1834, a French observer commented on the versatility of the city's business life:

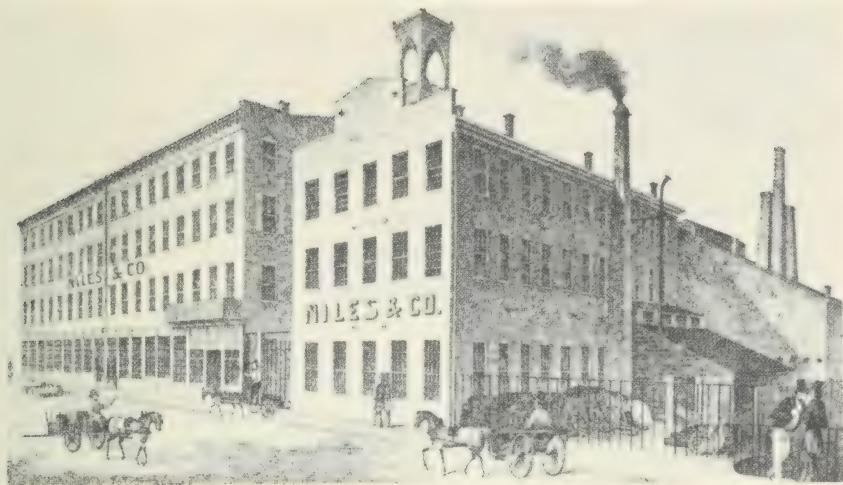
"The Cincinnatians make a variety of household furniture and utensils, agricultural and mechanical implements and machines, wooden clocks, and a thousand objects of daily use and consumption, soap, candles, paper, leather, etc., for which there is an indefinite demand throughout the flourishing and rapidly growing States of the West, and also in the new States of the Southwest, which are wholly devoted to agriculture, and in which, on account of the existence of slavery, manufactures cannot be carried on. Most of these articles are of ordinary quality; the furniture, for instance, is rarely such as would be approved by Parisian taste, but it is cheap and neat, just what is wanted in a new country, where, with the exception of a part of the South, there is a general ease and but little wealth. . . . The prosperity of Cincinnati, therefore, rests upon the sure basis of the prosperity of the West, upon the supply of articles of the first necessity to the bulk of the community; a much more solid foundation than the caprice of fashion."⁶⁴

During 1835 alone, there were built in Cincinnati one hundred steam-engines, 240 cotton-gins, twenty sugar-mills (for Louisiana and Cuba), and twenty-two steamboats.⁶⁵ By 1851, meat-packing establishments still led in the value of their products, estimated at \$5,760,000, although the 2,450 employees were exceeded by the 4,965 engaged in foundries and engine shops, and only slightly outnumbered the 2,320 employed as carpenters and builders. About one-third of the foundries were engaged in the production of stoves of which as many as one thousand were made in a single day.

Boots and shoes of every variety were manufactured in the city. This industry was thought to be especially desirable because it gave employment to those who otherwise would have been destitute. In

⁶⁴ Michel Chevalier, *Society, Manners and Politics in the U. S.* (Boston, 1839), 202-3.

⁶⁵ J. L. Bishop, *History of American Manufactures* (Philadelphia, 1868), II, 395.



7. NILES & CO. FACTORY

A typical early Ohio factory. From Charles Cist, *Cincinnati in 1851* (Cincinnati, 1851), facing p. 193.

1851, one woman and her three boys each earned three dollars a week, while an elderly man and his three or four children were able to make a combined income of twenty dollars a week. Cincinnati was also the great manufacturing center for ready-made clothing in the whole South and West. Operated chiefly by German Jews, these shops employed (in 1851) not only 950 persons, but utilized the efforts of over 9,000 women who did piece-work in their homes. By the decade of the 'forties the city had become the chief furniture-manufacturing center of the West. In 1851, the firm of Clawson and Mudge, specializing in bedsteads was producing at least ninety-five varieties, supplying not only the home but also the hotel market of the South and West. Another concern, that of George W. Coddington, manufactured as many as 180,000 chairs annually. That of C. D. Johnston, occupying a seven-story building, had a standing order with one St. Louis concern to furnish 30,000 chairs of various descriptions each year.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ Cist, *Cincinnati in 1851*, 169-262.

Cincinnati with its German brewmasters and beer-drinking population was a great brewing and distilling center. Ohio as a whole in 1840 had ranked sixth among the states in the number of distilleries with 373, producing 466,357 gallons in a year. By 1850, on a basis of distilleries *and* breweries, it ranked second in the number of gallons produced and the bushels of materials used, and third in capitalization and number of employees. Cincinnati was then the greatest distilling center in the world.⁶⁷

Hundreds of other manufactories producing thousands of articles were then in operation in Cincinnati, each making its contribution to the industrial and commercial importance of this "Queen City of the West." Cincinnati indeed was contributing magnificently to the significance of Ohio as one of the leading manufacturing states of the Union. Other towns and cities in Ohio had their industrial activities, but in the Ohio of 1850 there was but one Cincinnati.

In Ohio, as elsewhere in the United States, labor organizations were principally a development of the decades after 1850, for, except in the larger industrial plants, relations between employer and employee had not lost the elements of personal interest and mutual cooperation. In some cities mechanics' beneficial societies were formed. Such a society, in Columbus, incorporated in 1831, had for its purpose the advancement of "the best interests of the mechanics, manufacturers and artisans" by the more general diffusion of knowledge among them and by the affording of relief to unfortunate members.⁶⁸ In Cincinnati, German immigrants brought with them the idea of mutual-aid societies which were formed among master tailors, journeymen hatters, master carpenters, and other similar groups. In February, 1828, the bricklayers of Cincinnati held a meeting to agree on methods of avoiding fraud in the counting of bricks and in the use of smaller than standard bricks.⁶⁹ In the same city, printers organized a union in 1828, and

⁶⁷ De Bow, *Statistical View*, 182; Clark, *History of Manufactures*, I, 480.

⁶⁸ A. E. Lee, *History of the City of Columbus* (New York, 1892), II, 341-2.

⁶⁹ Cincinnati *Gazette*, Feb. 18, 1828.

by 1831 were issuing the *Working Man's Shield*, a pioneer labor paper of the country. A year later the Columbus Typographical Society was founded. In 1835, at Cincinnati the Harnessmakers' Union demanded higher wages and a shorter (ten-hour) day. During the next year carpenters, stonecutters and other construction workers there went on strike, and an effort to import strike-breakers from Philadelphia was a failure.⁷⁰

After the completion of the new Ohio penitentiary both employers and their "mechanics" were aroused by the system by which the labor of convicts was "farmed out" for the manufacture of various articles. A large meeting of mechanics met at Heyl's Tavern, Columbus, in April, 1835, to consult regarding their endangered interests, and similar meetings were held occasionally for many years. It was contended that convicts competed unfairly with "free" mechanics and that the "vile and vicious" were thereby trained in "respectable trades."⁷¹ In February, 1839, one Cincinnati angrily asserted that for ten years, beginning in the spring of 1829, he had manufactured saddletrees in Cincinnati and that he had done the largest business of any free-labor saddletree factory in the United States until forced out of business by convict competition. He declared that about sixty-five persons in the Cincinnati vicinity had been forced to abandon this business.⁷² The issue was carried into the fall elections of 1839,⁷³ but legislators of both parties found the problem a difficult one to solve without depriving the convicts of useful employment.

In the meantime, the panic of 1837, with its devastating effects upon business prosperity, disrupted local labor organizations, and labor groups for some years turned to political reforms. But, in 1847, after a strike and a retaliatory lockout, an iron-molders' union was formed in Cincinnati, and the printers there affiliated with the first national trade-union in 1850. In Columbus, in April,

⁷⁰ Cincinnati Federal Writers' Project, W.P.A. in Ohio, *They Built a City: 150 Years of Industrial Cincinnati* (Cincinnati, 1938), 384-8.

⁷¹ *Ohio State Journal*, June 18, 1839.

⁷² Luke Kendall, in *Ohio Statesman*, Feb. 25, 1839.

⁷³ *Ohio State Journal*, Oct. 8, 1839.

1848, about fifty journeymen carpenters marched through the streets with a band of music and a banner inscribed "1.50." Building construction was booming, and the journeymen found it a favorable time to strike for higher pay.

At the middle of the century Ohio was, by and large, still primarily an agricultural state. Its soil was fairly well under cultivation yet had not been tilled so long that its original fertility was exhausted; hence, the State occupied a place of surpassing importance in American agriculture, one that it had not held a few decades before and that it was not to maintain later with the development of the great grain-producing areas of the western Mississippi Valley.

CHAPTER IV

Modes of Transportation— Old and New

IN 1825, the Ohio River continued to be by far the most important single avenue of commerce for the people of Ohio. Flat-boats and keel-boats, the latter particularly desirable for the upstream journey, were in common use. By 1840, however, the light draught steamboat—first used on the river in 1811—had become the preferred means of passenger travel upon that water route. Every year new steamboats were being built both at Cincinnati and other points, and they rapidly acquired a major portion of the river traffic, except when extremely low water made the use of keel-boats advisable. In 1836 “the Queen City” had five boat-yards, where in that single year twenty-nine steamboats were completed.¹ During the decade of the 'forties and until superior railroad competition proved disastrous to their prosperity—after 1856—the commodious and sometimes luxurious river packets were convenient means of transportation not only for prominent visitors such as Charles Dickens and his wife, but likewise for tens of thousands of ordinary citizens. By such steamers, moreover, hosts of German and Irish immigrants found their way to new abodes in Ohio and in more westerly communities.

During the same period an important aspect of river traffic was the transportation of coal in flimsy boats, used for one journey only, from the upper reaches of the Ohio and its tributaries. With the growing importance of Cincinnati as an industrial center and the attendant decrease in the supply of wood, by 1850 more than 900,000 tons of coal were being consumed annually in that city,

¹ C. H. Ambler, *History of Transportation in the Ohio Valley* (Glendale, Cal., 1932), 48–9, 162.

and through shipments of the fuel to Cincinnati by rail did not begin until 1852.²

Among the inland streams of Ohio, several afforded local water transportation, but the Muskingum was the only one deemed navigable for steamboats. Northern Ohio, moreover, with its ready access to Lake Erie was settled later than the Ohio River counties, and it was not until 1824 that the first steamboat was constructed at any Lake Erie port within the bounds of Ohio.³ With the completion of the Erie Canal in New York state by 1825, however, northern Ohio adjacent to the Lake found markets in the East accessible as never before, and a great stimulus to commerce developed. With the opening of the Welland Canal, moreover, by the summer of 1836 twenty-five first-class lake boats were operating from New York City via Oswego and the Welland Canal to Cleveland.⁴ A thriving passenger traffic developed between the Lake ports, and during the summer months many enjoyed pleasure trips to the upper Lakes. Thousands of immigrants from Europe and the East, moreover, arrived via the Lake route. By 1850, a large lake vessel might accommodate as many as 270 cabin passengers and over 100 steerage passengers.⁵

Most of the freighters operating on the Lakes during this period were schooners, but the steamboats which carried both passengers and freight were the pride of local navigators. In 1844, Clevelanders were especially proud of the *Empire*, built in their community and launched in August of that year. Two hundred sixty feet in length and of 1,220 tons, it was declared to be larger than any steamship then plying the waters of the globe. One Cleveland editor exulted:

"How strange the contrast! and who can keep pace with the marvel march of Steam. Scarce twenty years ago the 'puffs' of the 'Walk-

² *Ibid.*, 295ff.

³ W. F. Gephart, *Transportation and Industrial Development in the Middle West*, Columbia University, *Studies in History, Economics and Public Law*, XXXIV, no. 1 (1909), 80-1.

⁴ *Cleveland Herald*, July 16, 1836.

⁵ *Cleveland Daily True Democrat*, July 1, 1850.

In-The-Water,' first broke the primeval stillness brooding on the waters of the vast Mediterraneans of the New World, and already they are hourly furrowed by a fleet of swift steamers of unrivalled excellence. Civilization and enterprise have changed the broad wilderness of the West into the most fruitful granary of earth— young commerce has but waved her magic wand and the Empress of the American Archipelagoes now proudly points to her unequalled Empire."⁶

By 1825, when the beginnings of commerce upon Lake Erie were already apparent, the interior counties of the State were discontentedly deploring the lack of adequate trading facilities with the outside world. Such communities found great difficulty in marketing their surplus products—a process essential to any society living above a barter economy. The first feeble beginnings of a state highway system had been inaugurated before 1815;⁷ but the rapidly increasing population had found the available facilities wholly inadequate. State roads constructed under the three per cent. fund were not really improved highways and were relatively few in number. In 1824 the legislature had taken steps to standardize the type of roads to be built by the State, by the counties, and by the townships, by fixing the width of those to be constructed by each of these governmental units at sixty-six, sixty, and forty feet respectively. For many years, however, except for a few turnpikes and some roads near the cities there were scarcely any satisfactory highways in Ohio. Some turnpikes were constructed by joint stock companies. Thus, a company was chartered by the legislature in 1823 to construct a road between Columbus and Sandusky. In 1827 Congress granted almost 32,000 acres for the assistance of the company which completed the road by 1834. Tolls were charged, although it was only a clay road.⁸ By 1828 a turnpike between Warren and Ashtabula Creek had been completed, and the State legislature had chartered the Cincinnati, Lebanon, and Springfield

⁶ *Cleveland Herald*, Aug. 20, 1844.

⁷ B. W. Bond, Jr., *Civilization of the Old Northwest* (New York, 1934), 365ff.

⁸ J. H. Studer, *History of Columbus* (Columbus, 1873), 39.

Turnpike Company with an authorized capital of \$150,000. The latter road was to start at Cincinnati and when each ten-mile stretch was completed, the company was authorized to commence the collection of tolls over that section.⁹ The following years were marked by similar projects and by the expansion of the Cumberland or National Road, which had reached Wheeling, across the river from Ohio as early as 1818.

During this period, however, it was especially to a state canal system that interior counties turned for relief from their economic isolation. For some years, leaders of public opinion, especially Governor Ethan Allen Brown and Alfred Kelley, a Cleveland lawyer, had been urging such a project, and progress had been made in the investigation of various proposed routes. A compromise between the numerous suggestions had to be made, and on February 4, 1825, State legislation—monumental in its significance—was passed by a vote of 58 to 13 in the House and with only two senators, William Gass of Richland County and Daniel Harbaugh of Columbiana County in opposition.¹⁰

The act provided that seven members should constitute the Board of Canal Commissioners with power to determine the exact route and commence the construction of two principal canals, one (the Ohio Canal) from Portsmouth via the Scioto Valley, Licking Summit (near Newark), and the Muskingum Valley northward to Lake Erie through the Cuyahoga Valley; the other (the Miami Canal), from Cincinnati to Dayton. A board of three members constituted a canal fund commission with authority to borrow money and supervise its expenditure. The canal revenues and taxes of the State were pledged for the payment of interest and principal. The commissioners could exercise the right of eminent domain, and persons engaged in work on the canals were protected from militia duty and from arrest in civil cases.¹¹

⁹ Columbus *Ohio State Journal*, Sept. 25, 1828; Cincinnati *Chronicle*, May 17, 1828.

¹⁰ Cleveland *Herald*, Feb. 11, 1825.

¹¹ C. C. Huntington and C. P. McClelland, *Ohio Canals, Their Construction, Cost, Use and Partial Abandonment* (Columbus, Ohio, 1905), *passim*.

For some months previous to the passage of the act it had been obvious that the Sandusky Valley route extending southward through the Olentangy Valley to Columbus and the Scioto Valley would not be used (partly due to the inadequacy of the water supply), and the people in that area were keenly disappointed. Likewise, counties in the extreme northeast corner of the State from the vicinity of Steubenville north to the Lake were centers of protest meetings. In Huron, Trumbull, Columbiana, and Ashtabula counties, cries were raised against being "saddled with taxes" which they were not "able or willing to pay without a struggle," and protests were launched also in Jefferson, Franklin, Geauga, Delaware, Richland, and Marion counties. The Sandusky *Clarion* and the press conducted by Woodrow Wilson's grandfather (James Wilson), the *Western Herald and Steubenville Gazette*, were particularly vociferous in their objections.¹²

The legislature endeavored to pacify the opposition by providing for the improvement of a road in the Sandusky Valley. At an opposition meeting at Steubenville, March 30, moreover, John C. Wright and John M. Goodenow were appointed to the committee to oppose the canal plans, but they unequivocally stated that they did not wish to be considered as opponents of the project.¹³ Elsewhere opposition meetings met with some disappointing reactions. By the end of May, one editor summarized the situation as follows:

"It is obvious that the opposition which seemed of such colossal magnitude, is now fast dwindling in its unexaggerated pigmy significance; and its leaders and instigators are beginning to discover that it is folly to oppose a measure already sanctioned by nine-tenths of the people of Ohio—merely because the canal will not cut through their own lands, or by their own doors."¹⁴

Part of the opposition may have been raised in the hope of defeating the financial arrangements, but by the end of April, the

¹² Painesville (Ohio) *Telegraph*, Mar. 19, 1825, and *passim*; Cleveland *Herald*, May 20, 1825.

¹³ *Western Herald and Steubenville [Ohio] Gazette*, July 30, 1825.

¹⁴ Hamilton (Ohio) *Advertiser*, May 27, 1825.

initial loan, of \$400,000, had been provided. The canal fund commissioners had advertised in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore for the money, but the low rate of interest—five per cent.—resulted in the highest offer being at a discount of two and one-half per cent., and on that basis the loan was taken by New York financiers.

Work on the canals was started on July 4, 1825, with appropriate ceremonies, at which Governor De Witt Clinton of New York—father of the Erie Canal system—was guest of honor. At Licking Summit, Clinton turned the first shovelful of dirt for the Ohio Canal, followed by a second shovelful turned by Governor Jeremiah Morrow of Ohio. Similar ceremonies marked the beginning of work on the Miami Canal at Middletown, July 21. It was hoped that the Ohio Canal would permit the marketing of Ohio's surplus farm products in New York City, hence work was first started in earnest on the part of the route near Lake Erie. At the same time a contract was awarded for the forty-two mile stretch of the Miami Canal from Middletown to the outskirts of Cincinnati. By late November, 1,500 to 2,000 men were working on the Ohio Canal northward from Portage Summit.¹⁵

The competition for the canal contracts was extremely keen. On the Ohio Canal south of Portage Summit nearly 6,000 bids were received in 1826 for the 110 sections, an average of fifty-four proposals for each section. These bids had to be carefully analyzed, to make sure that contracts should not be undertaken by irresponsible contractors who might abandon their work when they found that they could not make a profit. Nevertheless, contracts were sometimes abandoned by overambitious or unfortunate contractors, and time and expense were lost by the State in reawarding them. All contracts were in writing, signed by the acting commissioner for the State and by the contractor. The various types of work contracted for included: (1) Grubbing and clearing the right of way and a strip twenty feet wide on both sides of the canal bed;

¹⁵ E. L. Bogart, *Internal Improvements and State Debt in Ohio* (New York, 1924), 13.

(2) The removal of wood, rubbish, and loose dirt so as to provide solid banks where the sides of the canal were above the surface of the surrounding territory; (3) The removal of water, earth, and rocks, where the canal was below the surrounding land, and the erection of necessary embankments; (4) The construction of locks and culverts, of wood or stone; (5) The reinforcement of all culverts and locks by a puddle of gravel mixed with clay loam; (6) The protection, by stone of suitable size and shape, of those banks of the canal that were likely to wash away.¹⁶

Contractors sometimes hired all of their labor but often sublet the work to other contractors who employed their own workmen. Laborers generally received eight to ten dollars a month in addition to board and lodging. In wet weather, when work was suspended, the laborer lost his pay for that time, but board and lodging costs continued at the expense of the employer.¹⁷ As time went on, and the demand for labor increased, especially in connection with the Pennsylvania canal system, the wage scale was forced up to a level of twelve to fifteen dollars a month. Laborers on the canal worked under conditions not unlike those prevailing in similar projects executed by manual workers. Shanties of the crudest type housed them and were abandoned as the occupants moved on to a new location. The primitive character of the country and the necessity of working at times knee-deep in water, caused malarial fever. For a preventative, whiskey was dispensed as a part of the regular compensation. The work generally continued from early spring until health conditions made a suspension of activities imperative about July 15; later, after the first frost, work was resumed until winter again intervened.¹⁸

A major portion of the work was performed by farmers and their sons whose homes were along the canal routes and who welcomed an opportunity to obtain ready cash. The Zoar community profited by a special contract with the State to perform the work in

¹⁶ Huntington and McClelland, *Ohio Canals*, 23-6.

¹⁷ W. C. Howells, *Recollections of Life in Ohio from 1813 to 1840* (Cincinnati, 1895), 139.

¹⁸ Bogart, *Internal Improvements*, 25.

their neighborhood. Naturally, workers were attracted from the more congested areas along the Atlantic Seaboard, and many Irish immigrants who had arrived at Quebec, Montreal, or New York found their way to Ohio and made possible the more rapid completion of the canals.¹⁹ The city of Akron arose from shanties which housed the Irish canal workers during the construction of the Ohio Canal.

Under the provisions of an Ohio law of January, 1823, individuals and communities to be benefited by the canals were urged to contribute to the canal fund. Donations in lands and money amounted to more than \$25,000 in 1826, mostly from those living north of Tuscarawas County on the Ohio Canal route. The locating of the canal route so as to touch a particular town was sometimes the condition of such a grant. Accordingly, the canal commissioners, in charge of the location of the route, made some modifications to suit local interests. Bitter controversies developed from the rivalry of competing groups. Thus, in 1825, it had been widely assumed that the Ohio Canal, after reaching the Scioto Valley a few miles south of Columbus, would proceed along that river to Chillicothe, where it would cross that stream and go along the west side to the vicinity of Piketon; then, recross the river and continue along the east bank to Portsmouth. Tax rates were assessed on the lands with such an understanding in mind. As late as 1830, the location of the canal through Chillicothe was a matter of animated discussion, and after local elections had been fought out on the question of the route, one citizen wrote in January, 1830, "The town will never be at rest if divided by a canal."²⁰ Too many crossings of the river by the canal were apparently deemed inadvisable, and the route through the Scioto Valley, as finally laid out, was along the east bank to the vicinity of Circleville, where the canal was carried over the river by a wooden aqueduct which one traveler in 1833 found had fallen down the day before the boat on

¹⁹ W. F. Adams, *Ireland and Irish Emigration to the New World* (New Haven, 1932), 354-7.

²⁰ Thomas James to Duncan McArthur, Chillicothe, Jan. 13, 1830, McArthur MSS.

which he was a passenger came along that way.²¹ From the Circle-ville region, the route proceeded along the west bank of the river to Portsmouth without any crossings at Chillicothe or Piketon. Many believed that a crossing at Piketon had been prevented through the influence of Robert Lucas whose lands west of the river would benefit if the canal were located there.²²

Exactly two years after the ground-breaking ceremony of 1825, on July 4, 1827, the northern part of the Ohio Canal—from Akron to Cleveland—was opened to traffic with exuberant enthusiasm. Forty-one locks and three aqueducts had been built in this section of the canal. A wide variety of agricultural products was thereafter transported by this route to the eastern markets, and woolen cloth, formerly conveyed by wagon to Baltimore or Philadelphia, now found its way overland from the mills of Steubenville to Massillon on the Ohio Canal and thence via the canal, Lake Erie, and the waterways of New York state to the Atlantic Seaboard.

Everywhere the completion of the canal facilities was eagerly awaited. Characteristic was a comment in a letter written from Portsmouth in 1827, "Business of every kind is very dull here; but we all hope to live on milk and honey and without labor when we get the canal."²³ By the summer of 1830 navigation was open as far south as Newark, and during 1833 the entire length of 333 miles (including twenty-five miles of feeders) from Cleveland to Portsmouth had been completed. The lower lock at the latter city, however, was not completed until 1834. The principal feeders in this system were the 11.6-mile branch canal from the main trunk to Columbus and the 6.14-mile branch to Granville in Licking County.

In 1834 shipments of pork and whiskey from Ohio via the Ohio Canal generally went northward to Cleveland and the East from points north of Chillicothe, and southward to the Ohio and Missis-

²¹ Gustave Koerner, *Memoirs*, ed. by Thomas J. McCormack (Cedar Rapids, 1909), I, 281.

²² J. C. Parish, *Robert Lucas* (Iowa City, 1907), 81.

²³ John McDonald to McArthur, Oct. 24, 1827, McArthur MSS.

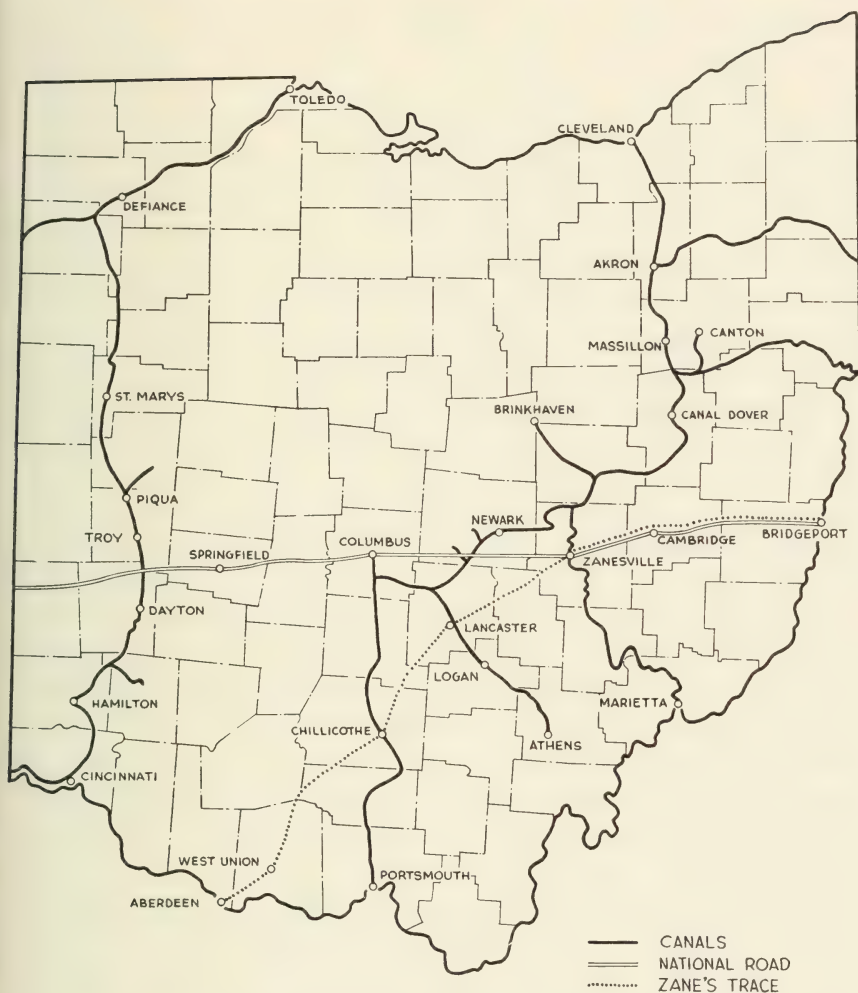
sippi routes from places south of Chillicothe. At that time, hardware and dry goods usually came to Ohio from Pittsburgh to Portsmouth and via the canal to points as far north as Cleveland; furniture and salt came via the Erie, Welland, and Ohio canals to places as far south as Chillicothe; and sugar and molasses came via steamboat from New Orleans to Portsmouth, and to northern points via the Ohio Canal. By 1844, the dividing line for the shipment of some articles on the canal was farther north than formerly, for whiskey and tobacco by that time were going southward from the region of Newark.²⁴

By the end of November, 1827, the portion of the Miami Canal from Middletown to Cincinnati had been constructed, and with the opening of navigation the next spring, water was let into the canal between Howell's Basin (then four miles from the city) and Cincinnati. On March 17, 1828, six canal-boats, led by the *Washington* and the *De Witt Clinton* and loaded with freight and passengers, entered Cincinnati amidst the booming of cannon and wild rejoicing. A celebration at McFarland's Hotel followed.²⁵ Yet, not until 1834 was the lockage between Main Street in that city and the Ohio River completed. The Miami Canal like the Ohio Canal had a minimum width of forty feet at the surface and twenty-six feet at the bottom, the depth being four feet. In general, however, the minimum dimensions were exceeded, and large portions of these arterial canals had a depth of from five to twelve feet, and a breadth at the water line of from 60 to 150 feet or more.

When the Ohio and the Miami canals had been planned in 1825, northwestern Ohio was largely unsettled, but it was expected that the latter would ultimately be extended from Dayton to Lake Erie. Accordingly, as early as February 8, 1825, the legislature renewed its earlier overtures to Congress for a donation of lands to assist with its canal plans. A canal system would enhance the value of other public lands; and the almost universal acceptance of the ideas of internal improvements and a protective tariff by the po-

²⁴ A. L. Kohlmeier, *Old Northwest* (Bloomington, Ind., 1938), 16, 55.

²⁵ *Cincinnati Gazette*, March 19, 1828.



MAP 8. CANALS, NATIONAL ROAD AND ZANE'S TRACE

Based upon a map prepared by the Ohio Geological Survey which was reproduced in E. H. Roseboom and F. P. Weisenburger, *A History of Ohio* (New York, 1931).

litically significant Old Northwest added to the potency of Ohio's demands upon Congress. In March, 1827, Congress granted Indiana lands equivalent to one-half of five sections in width on each side of a canal to be built from the Wabash River to Lake Erie. Ohio

desired similar assistance. Ohio congressmen succeeded in securing a Federal grant to Ohio, approved May 24, 1828, for land amounting to one-half of five sections on each side of the canal all along the route from Dayton to the mouth of the Auglaize (at Defiance) in so far as the Federal Government owned such land. The United States reserved for itself the unsold alternate sections and placed a minimum price of \$2.50 upon each acre that had the advantage of improved transportation. By this grant Ohio received over 438,000 acres. Both political parties in the State at that time favored internal improvements, and since this bill as passed was credited to the Administration (Adams-Clay) party, the Jacksonians proposed a new bill to grant a similar amount for both canals. This was not carried, but the original bill was amended to accomplish the same purpose. Thus, due to party rivalry, Ohio received an additional grant of approximately 500,000 acres in the State. The extension of the Miami Canal was of interest to Indiana which found that the building of the Wabash and Erie Canal might dovetail with the Ohio project.²⁶ Accordingly, Indiana proposed that Ohio should build the canal from the State line to Lake Erie, receiving as compensation the lands within Ohio which Indiana had obtained from Congress. The Federal Government, as well as the two states, agreed to the transfer, and Ohio thereby came into possession of 292,224 additional acres of land for sale. To facilitate the sale of the 500,000 acres, land-offices were established at Tiffin and Piqua.

Such activity rekindled the fires of opposition in certain counties not directly benefited by the canals. The St. Clairsville *National Historian* declared that the State was already sufficiently in debt and that when projects previously undertaken were completed, the thoughts of Ohio should be turned toward railroads. Early in 1830 seven members of the Ohio House of Representatives protested against further examinations of the Miami Canal extension. The House rejected this, but a large public meeting at Steubenville

²⁶ Lee Newcomer, "Construction of the Wabash and Erie Canal," *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, XLVI, 199-208.

opposed the building of additional canals at State expense.²⁷ Indeed, Ohio delayed the actual beginning of the work on the Miami extension, hesitating in part because Michigan disputed the ownership of the region near Maumee Bay, the proposed northern terminus of the canal. Ohio won the contested territory, and by the close of 1837, contracts had been awarded for the whole project from the Indiana line to the terminus.

In contemplation of such developments the whole Maumee Valley experienced a wave of real estate speculation which ended only with the panic of 1837. The canal authorities eventually decided that the canal should follow the north bank of the river with the terminus on the bay rather than at Maumee City a few miles up the river near the foot of the rapids. The Wabash and Erie Canal, with a capacity almost three times that of the Ohio Canal, was larger than any other in the State. The canal contracts awarded to the lowest reliable bidders, proved at times to be too low for profitable execution, and in some cases had to be abandoned and reawarded at a higher figure. By 1843, this canal was opened for navigation from Lafayette, Indiana, to Toledo. At a point in the northeastern part of Paulding County, appropriately called Junction, the canal was joined to the Miami extension, which was completed by 1845.

The Miami Canal north of Dayton cost thirty to fifty per cent. more than would have been reasonable for the work. In one case a certain dam was to be built, and the lowest responsible bid—for \$4,000—was rejected by the authorities who decided to do the work themselves. The final cost to the State was approximately \$13,000 and constituted but one of many frauds later brought to light in connection with the Miami extension construction.²⁸ By an act of the legislature of March 14, 1849, the Miami Canal, the Miami Extension Canal, and the Wabash and Erie Canal, became known as the Miami and Erie Canal. The length of the

²⁷ St. Clairsville (Ohio) *National Historian*, Feb. 6, May 15, 1830; Cincinnati *Gazette*, Feb. 15, 1830.

²⁸ William Renick, *Memoirs, Correspondence and Reminiscences* (Circleville, Ohio, 1880), 83-4.

main canal was 249 miles, with 19 aqueducts, three guard locks, and 103 lift locks. There were thirty-six miles of side cuts and feeders, the longest of which was the canal to the Indiana line (eighteen miles) and the Sidney Feeder (fourteen miles). A number of smaller canals were constructed wholly or in part by private companies. These, totaling about 210 miles in length, included the Warren County Canal from Lebanon to Middletown; the Cincinnati and Whitewater Canal from Cincinnati into Wayne County, Indiana; the Sandy and Beaver Canal from Bolivar on the Ohio Canal to the mouth of the Little Beaver on the Pennsylvania-Ohio boundary; and the Pennsylvania and Ohio Canal from Akron to the Pennsylvania and Erie Canal. The Warren County Canal was taken over, uncompleted, by the State in 1836, and annexed to the Miami Canal system. It was completed by 1840. In 1836, Ohio also planned other branch canals, the Walhonding Canal, from the Ohio Canal up the valley of the Walhonding River, completed in 1841; and the Hocking Canal, previously begun in part by private capital, from the Ohio Canal at Carroll to Athens, and completed by 1843. The State also undertook the canalization of seventy-five miles of the Muskingum River, a project known as the "Muskingum Improvement" and finished by 1840. The canals could not depend upon water from near-by streams which at times became practically dry during the summer months. Hence, various reservoirs were constructed, one on each of the summits on the Ohio Canal—Portage in Summit County and Licking in Licking County, and three (St. Mary's, Lewistown, and Loramie) on the one summit of the Miami and Erie Canal.

Such a canal-building program obviously demanded heavy expenditures. At the time of the beginning of the undertaking in 1825, the legislature had established the Board of Canal Fund Commissioners to supervise the receipt and disbursement of all funds obtained in connection with the building and operation of the canals. Interest payments—six per cent. being the maximum—were guaranteed by the taxes and good faith of the State. Such loans were generally obtained until 1838 by advertisements (in

the newspapers of the chief American cities) which attracted the attention of bankers on the seaboard and in Europe. After 1838 advertisements were abandoned, and loans were frequently negotiated through brokers' offices. In 1825, the first loan of \$400,000 had been obtained in New York. This and other borrowings during the years 1825-1832 inclusive (the first period of canal construction) totaled \$4,500,000. A lull in canal building followed until 1836, when a second period of development began. During the next ten-year period (1836-1845), loans obtained amounted to \$8,722,123. Premiums were paid by the buyers upon most of the loans, but at times, as in 1825 and in 1842, a discount had to be taken because of the low interest rate offered or because of the disturbed condition of credits, especially in the West. In all, up to 1844, the discounts exceeded the premiums so as to make a net loss of \$52,583. On the other hand, interest paid upon Ohio funds by New York and Ohio banks, and the rate of exchange in transferring eastern funds to western banks—generally in Ohio's favor—benefited the finances of the State. The sale of lands donated by the Federal Government also added to the State's assets. Good prices were obtained for such lands, disposed of at the land-offices at Piqua and Tiffin and by public sales at Defiance and Perrysburg. Additional revenues, moreover, were obtained from the sale of surplus canal water and of water power.

Of special importance, of course, as a producer of revenue were the canal tolls which were first collected on the Ohio Canal in 1827 and on the Miami Canal during the next year. During 1827 toll receipts amounted to \$1,500. Increasing steadily each year, they amounted to \$532,688.60 in 1840 (\$452,122.03 of which was on the Ohio Canal). Declining during the next few years, they regained their lost position in the late 'forties, and in 1851 reached an all-time record of \$799,024.58 (\$432,711.38 of which was on the Ohio Canal). Thereafter the decline was persistent and rapid.

In addition to the initial expense for the canals, frequent repairs were costly. Sometimes an aqueduct collapsed, or a lock needed reconstruction, or a bank of the canal needed mending.

In such cases, restoration to normal conditions was frequently not accomplished before considerable inconvenience had been experienced by travelers and shippers. Thus, a traveler who reached Waverly in 1840 found two breaches in the canal between that place and Portsmouth, and those of his companions who were in haste found it necessary to hire wagon transportation or to proceed on horseback.²⁹

Commercially speaking, during the early canal era Ohio seemed to fall into two principal regions, a northern and a southern one, divided by a rather rough line drawn through Piqua, Urbana, Columbus, Newark, Zanesville, and Steubenville. North of this was a region which utilized the canals to ship goods—especially wheat, flour, and pork, but also corn, oats, coal, and some wool and tobacco—to the Lake and thence to the New York market, receiving in return salt and numerous manufactured articles. The region south of this line carried on its trade via the Ohio River with New Orleans, shipping flour, corn, pork, bacon, and whiskey and receiving manufactured products in return. Before 1840 goods from the Northeastern Seaboard were frequently sent to the Southwestern States via the Ohio Canal, but the great length and extensive lockage of the Ohio waterway soon caused a virtual disappearance of this through traffic. After 1840 goods for Ohio points continued to come from the East via Lake Erie and the canals. At about this time, however, rates from New Orleans by ocean vessel to the Eastern Seaboard were materially reduced. The result was a great increase in the shipping of products from Ohio to the East via New Orleans.

Canal rates varied. In general, higher tolls were assessed upon merchandise such as sugar, molasses, iron, nails, and dry goods than upon inexpensive bulky goods like coal, stone, and lumber. Because the rates were practically prohibitive for through traffic, they were cut in half in 1833, at the time of the completion of the Ohio Canal. In 1834 an arrangement was made with New York, by

²⁹ J. S. Buckingham, *Eastern and Western States of America* (London, 1842), II, 353-4.



8. AN EARLY OHIO CANAL-BOAT

Courtesy of Ohio State Museum.

which merchandise utilizing the Ohio and New York canals from the Hudson Valley to the Ohio River was given a twenty-five per cent. reduction in rates on both systems. Rates which had increased in 1837, due largely to rises in commercial prices, were modified the next year in a downward direction, and were reduced in 1842.

The macadamizing of roads connecting with the National Pike, the tendency for northern Ohio farmers to haul their produce by wagon to Lake ports, the reduction in toll rates upon the roads leading to Philadelphia and Baltimore, were evidences of severe competition for the Ohio canals. Accordingly, in 1845 the rates upon the canals were materially lowered, especially upon products of the Ohio Valley and of the region south of it, in an effort to divert traffic in a northerly direction. Considerable success resulted from this endeavor, but railroad competition soon assumed ominous proportions, and general rate reductions—averaging about thirty per cent.—were made in April, 1851.

With the building of the first railroads in Ohio, the days of the canals, in the minds of some, were already thought to be numbered; and, as events were to prove, the waterways could not indefinitely withstand the superior competition of the railroads. They had, nevertheless, played a major role—and for some years were to continue to perform an important function—in the development of the State. Without them the rapid expansion of Ohio in population and wealth would have been materially delayed, and the era in which barter played a major part would have been definitely prolonged. Cities along the canals grew with phenomenal rapidity. Cleveland increased in population from 1,076 in 1830 to 17,034 in 1850, and Cincinnati during the same period from 24,831 to 115,435. Property advanced in value, especially in the canal counties, and a striking appreciation was noted in the price of agricultural products. Thus, in the vicinity of Newark, before the completion of the Ohio Canal, corn in the field brought 8.5 to 12.5 cents a bushel, but in 1829, with canal transportation available, it sold for 28 cents a bushel.³⁰ Consequently new lands were opened up, and the products of forest and mine, as well as of field and meadow, found their way to profitable markets.³¹

With the building of the canals, side-roads leading to the waterways and main roads were demanded for districts untouched by the canals. Kentucky had passed legislation for state aid to turnpike companies, and this led to a demand in 1836 for similar legislation in Ohio.³² The result was a new Ohio statute which empowered the governor to subscribe to the stock of turnpike companies to an amount equaling that taken by private individuals. Earlier, counties had been permitted to subscribe to stock in turnpike companies within their boundaries, express authorization generally being given by special acts. Under the law of 1836, such liberal subscriptions were made to turnpike companies that by a

³⁰ Renick, *Memoirs*, 83-4.

³¹ Bogart, *Internal Improvements*, 78-88.

³² Cincinnati *Gazette*, Dec. 16, 1836.

law of 1840, the practise was prohibited, except for certain cases where work had been begun, and by a law of 1844, new agreements, even for the extension of public works, were forbidden. Much improvement in the roads of the State, however, was evident. In 1839, the Sandusky *Democrat* reported that the Western Reserve and Maumee road between the Sandusky and Maumee rivers would shortly be completely converted from an almost bottomless slough-hole to one of the finest roads in the State.³³ In 1843 *Hunt's Merchants' Magazine* of New York reported that during the previous five years Ohio had "constructed an extent of McAdam roads exceeding any other state, and amounting to hundreds of miles."³⁴

The State experienced considerable difficulty with the turnpike companies, often failing to receive reliable information as to the tolls collected and the purposes to which they had been put. Considerable deviation existed in tolls in spite of State legislation which tried to secure uniformity, but a convention of turnpike companies was called in 1844, and it adopted a revised uniform schedule of rates. Sometimes, when the turnpikes fell into a poor state of repair, the public resented the payment of tolls. Thus, in 1843, although the turnpike company operating between Wooster and Cleveland claimed that more than the amount received from tolls had been spent upon upkeep, many protested against charges for the use of such an "outrageous mud-pike," and vandals tore down the gates between Cleveland and Medina. Similarly, gates along the Sandusky-Columbus road were demolished, one of the culprits being dangerously wounded near Delaware by a representative of the company in the fracas that attended the destruction of the property.³⁵ Such episodes and the return of prosperity during the decade of the 'forties gave impetus to a movement for the construction of free turnpikes by local governments. In 1843 the Ohio legislature authorized county

³³ Columbus *Ohio Statesman*, May 7, 1839.

³⁴ IX, 33.

³⁵ Cleveland *Herald*, April 25, Sept. 29, Oct. 19, 1843.

commissioners to build roads, collecting donations for the purpose, and assessing a tax upon land within two miles of the highway. Before 1845, special acts were the rule for the incorporation of a highway, railroad, bridge, or manufacturing company, but in that year a general law for the building of highways was passed. At about the same time plank roads began to come into general use.

Of especial interest to Ohioans in the realm of highway construction was the Cumberland Road or the National Road, as it was commonly called west of Wheeling. Contemporaneous with the building of the first Ohio canals went a whole-hearted approval in the State of the extension of this important arterial route. Previous to 1825, due to constitutional scruples on the part of many old school Republicans, grave uncertainty existed as to whether the road would be continued west of Wheeling. A few weeks after Ohio had authorized her canal program, however, a bill finally passed Congress, on March 3, 1825, appropriating \$150,000 for the extension of the road to Zanesville in Ohio and for the continuance of surveys to Missouri through the permanent capitals of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. For some decades the crossing from Wheeling to the State of Ohio was made by ferry, but then a bridge—of considerable magnitude for that time—was erected, to the great admiration of the people of that generation. This mid-century marvel was dedicated in November, 1849. By the summer of 1827 the road had been graded as far as Cambridge and paved to Fairview.³⁶ In the same year Congress appropriated \$170,000 for the completion of the road as far as Zanesville, and in 1829 additional money was voted for the road. Ohio was sufficiently level to make possible the building of the road at much less expense than in Pennsylvania. In eastern Ohio the average cost per mile was about \$3,400, including successive three-inch layers of broken stone, necessary culverts, and stone bridges. The old road from Zanesville to Columbus had gone via Newark and Granville, but a more southerly route was decided upon for the National Pike. By 1833, the road was completed

³⁶ *National Historian*, July 7, 1827.



9. HEADLEY INN MARKER-STONE

This inn is a famous old tavern on the National Road, near Zanesville. Courtesy of Frank J. Roos, Jr.

to the Ohio capital and by January, 1838, to a point a few miles west of Springfield, Ohio. In May of that year the last Federal appropriation was made for the furtherance of the road. This highway was not completed through Indiana until 1850, and then only under state authorization.³⁷

In April, 1828, the Ohio legislature had taken steps toward the permanent repair and maintenance of the National Road. A fine of not more than \$500 or imprisonment in the dungeon of the jail with bread and water only for not over thirty days, or both, was prescribed for those breaking or defacing the milestones, culverts, and bridges. In 1831, Ohio accepted from the Federal Government the completed portions of the road within the State's boundaries and authorized the erection of toll-gates at distances

³⁷ A. B. Hulbert, *Cumberland Road* (Cleveland, 1904), 73-83, 91ff.

of twenty miles. Later, gates were constructed at ten-mile intervals. Rates were changed from time to time, the toll for a horse and rider varying between 1831 and 1850 from four to six and a quarter cents. Ohio, like other states, granted fairly liberal exemptions from tolls, and during at least part of that period persons going to or from church, muster, mill, funeral, voting place, or market within the county passed free. School children, clergymen, mail conveyances, soldiers, or transporters of government property were also allowed to proceed without toll payment. For highway transportation there were three general classes of service: (1) farmers who offered to perform the work during slack farming seasons or when compensation was especially attractive; (2) owners of three-team outfits which hauled freight under special contract by the trip; (3) the principal companies doing both a passenger and freight business and utilizing many wagons and coaches.³⁸

West of Wheeling the most important stage organization operating on the National Road was the Ohio National Stage Company of Columbus. It was finally able to force the discontinuance of a leading competitor, Neil, Moore, and Company of the same Ohio city, William Neil joining the consolidated organization. Some indication of the speed of passenger transportation is indicated by the coach schedules for the winter of 1835-36. The trip from Columbus to Wheeling took from twenty to twenty-four hours; to Cincinnati, thirty-six hours (with six hours' rest in Springfield); to Cleveland, forty hours; and to Sandusky, two days.

By the decade of the 'thirties there was much discussion of railroad prospects. The first railroad charter in Ohio was granted by the legislature in February, 1830, to the Ohio and Steubenville road which was never built.³⁹ By 1832, when less than two hundred miles of railroad were in operation in the entire country, the

³⁸ C. E. McGill, *History of Transportation in the United States before 1860* (Washington, 1917), 124-7.

³⁹ Ohio Commissioner of Railroads, *Annual Report . . . 1868* (Columbus, 1868), 276.



10. RED BRICK TAVERN, LAFAYETTE

An historic hostelry about 22 miles west of Columbus on the National Road; built in 1837. Courtesy of Frank J. Roos, Jr.

agitation for such means of transportation in Ohio had reached the stage of enthusiasm. At that time the question of charters was discussed with animation in the Ohio legislature, the press reporting: "The Railroad fever is permitted to rage unmolested in both houses. The Sandusky and Columbus, and the Mad river and Lake Erie railroad bills are passed, with liberal charters."⁴⁰

Various meetings were held in connection with the Sandusky-Columbus project, but the proposal did not reach fruition. In 1831 one charter had been granted by the Ohio legislature (to the Richmond, Eaton, and Miami Railroad Company). Ten charters were granted in 1832 (including that of the Mad River and Lake Erie line). By 1835 it became evident that railroad corporations could not obtain sufficient funds by stock subscriptions, hence

⁴⁰ Cleveland *Advertiser*, Jan. 3, 1832.

they were granted the right to borrow money. During 1837 the Ohio legislature approved of twelve new railroad charters and passed the "Plunder Law" of March 24, 1837, which declared that the State should loan its credit to the extent of one-third of the capital of the corporation, provided the other two-thirds had been paid into the company.

Among the projects which profited by the Plunder Law was the Mad River line which was authorized to obtain \$200,000 on the credit of the State and \$25,000 to \$60,000 by stock subscriptions on the part of each of the counties to be traversed by the road. The City of Springfield was permitted to subscribe \$25,000. By 1838 the first sixteen miles of the road, which was to run between Sandusky and Springfield, had been completed. The initial run, from Sandusky to Bellevue, was made in that year in forty minutes "to the great enjoyment of passengers and spectators" but to the great fright of cattle and dogs along the way that were unused to the sound of the steam whistle.⁴¹ The remainder of the road went through more sparsely populated territory and was not completed through to Springfield until 1848. In 1842 the first fifteen miles of the first railroad to enter Cincinnati, the Little Miami Railroad (to run from that city to Springfield) were opened to traffic. In 1845 the road had reached Xenia, and during 1848 it was completed to Springfield.

The esteemed ex-Governor Jeremiah Morrow was the president of Little Miami after its chartering in 1836. He regarded this work as a task of constructive statesmanship rather than as an avenue of pecuniary enrichment, serving without pay and resigning when the success of the line was assured.⁴² Subscriptions of stock to the amount of \$50,000 by Greene County, \$150,000 by the State of Ohio, and \$200,000 by Cincinnati, helped to launch the project. Connecting at Springfield with the Mad River and Lake Erie road in 1848 it permitted for the first time transportation

⁴¹ Cleveland *Herald and Gazette*, May 22, 1838.

⁴² *Dictionary of American Biography*, ed. by Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone (New York, 1928-1937), XIII, 235-6.

by rail across the State (from Cincinnati to Sandusky). The Little Miami road took pride in its "expensive depots and a great number of cars and locomotives."⁴³

The *first* railroad to operate on Ohio soil, however, was one projected in 1832, which touched the State for only a few miles. Known as the Erie and Kalamazoo, by 1836 it had been completed from Toledo to Adrian, Michigan. It was the pioneer railroad of the West. At first it employed oak for rails and used horse power, but a thin iron covering and a strap rail were soon substituted. The first train, drawn by horses, went into operation October 3, 1836. In July, 1837, a steam locomotive (No. 80 of the Baldwin Locomotive Works) was brought from Philadelphia to Toledo by water and placed in service. It attained a speed of twenty miles an hour. In the same year this line began to carry the United States mails and to use a coach called the "Pleasure Car," with three compartments, each holding eight passengers with the lower middle part of the coach reserved for baggage. The passenger fare was \$1.50 on the horse-drawn "lumber car" and \$2.25 on the "Pleasure Car" (with fifty pounds of baggage carried free) for the thirty-three-mile run. Freight was hauled at the rate of fifty cents per hundred pounds.⁴⁴

Cincinnati business leaders were thoroughly aware of the important interest which their city had in the southern trade. Hence, in November, 1835, a meeting was held in that city with such prominent persons as William Henry Harrison, Robert T. Lytle and others joining in the discussion. A committee of five was to be appointed in each ward of the city to obtain signatures to a petition to the Ohio legislature authorizing Cincinnati to take stock not exceeding \$500,000 in a contemplated railroad from Cincinnati to Charleston.⁴⁵ Edward Deering Mansfield prepared a pamphlet (with a map) entitled *Railroad from the Banks of the Ohio River to the Tide Waters of the Carolinas and Georgia*, and in September,

⁴³ *Merchants' Magazine*, XXI, 240-2.

⁴⁴ P. F. Laning, "History of the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad in Ohio," M. A. thesis, Ohio State University, 1938, 30-2.

⁴⁵ *Cincinnati Gazette*, Dec. 1, 1835.

1836, published an article on the subject in the *Western Monthly Review*. Further meetings were held late in 1836, and Harrison, Mansfield and others visited the South in the interests of the plan.⁴⁶ In 1837, however, the panic ended any enthusiasm for great expenditures for railroad development to the south of Cincinnati, and not until the Civil War were railroad connections constructed between that city and Charleston.

One rather unusual railroad project was the Ohio Railroad, organized at Painesville in April, 1836. Under the "Plunder Act" of 1837, the company received \$249,000 as the State's subscription to the stock of the road. The road was to be built from Richmond (opposite Fairport) to Manhattan (the present Toledo). A construction plan for a road on stilts was used, and twenty-nine miles from Manhattan to Fremont and about fifteen of the forty-seven miles from Cleveland to Huron were completed before the scheme collapsed in 1843.⁴⁷ During 1838 a short road between Cleveland and Newburgh in Cuyahoga County began operations, but it used only horse-power and carried chiefly stone and lumber. For several years meetings were held in Cleveland and neighboring communities advocating the building of a railroad via Warren to Pittsburgh. By 1846, a railroad built earlier from Sandusky to Monroeville had been greatly improved and extended to Mansfield, a total distance of fifty-six miles. Fare over the line was \$1.25 on the daily accommodation train; \$1.75 on the express train. By January, 1851, rail facilities had been extended to Newark, fifty-five miles farther south.

A charter for a railroad from Cleveland to Cincinnati had been granted by the Ohio legislature in 1836 but was later forfeited. The project was revived in 1845, capital amounting to \$50,000 being subscribed in Columbus and Cleveland in 1847. As part of the plan the Columbus and Xenia Railroad was organized with Alfred Kelley as president. In the same year the Cleveland, Columbus and Cincinnati Railroad, of which Kelley was also president

⁴⁶ *Dict. of Amer. Biog.*, XII, 255-6.

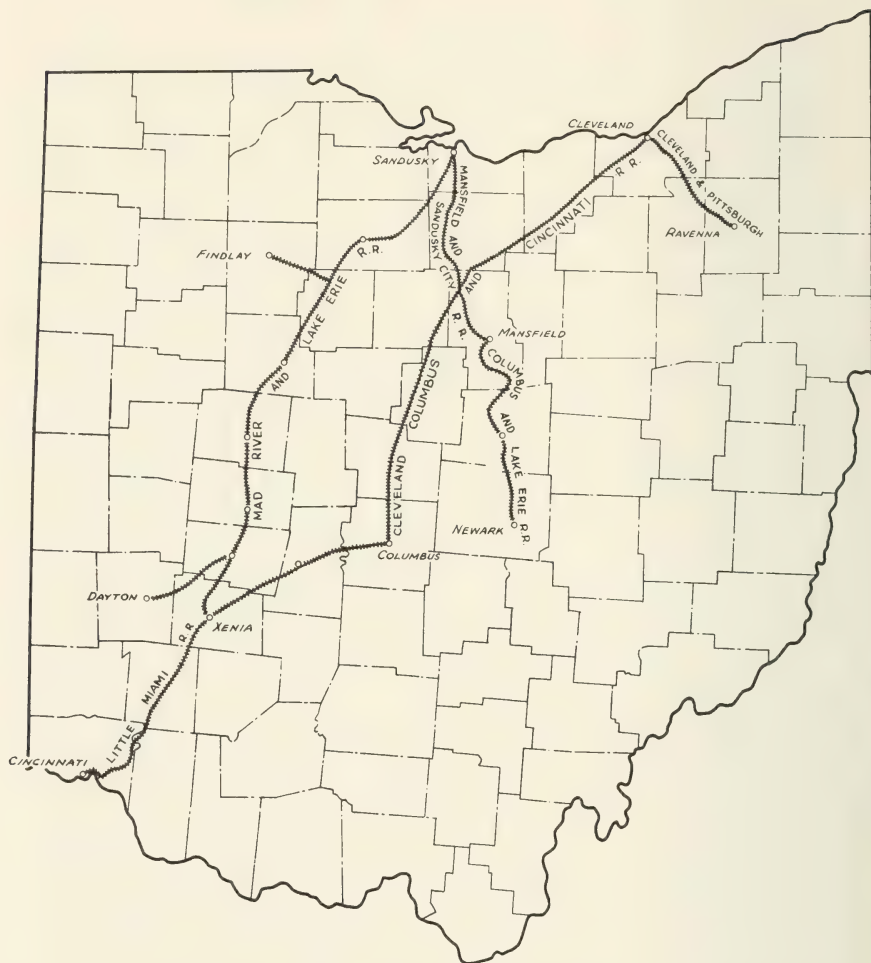
⁴⁷ Laning, "Lake Shore Railroad," 16-8.

was formed. Leonard Case of Cleveland became a director and vice-president, and in 1848 a subscription of \$200,000 from the City of Cleveland and additional amounts from private citizens permitted the contract to be awarded. Amasa Stone, who had been superintendent of the New Haven, Hartford and Springfield Railroad, cooperated with Stillman Witt and Frederick Harbach in contracting to build the road. By June, 1850, two trains a day were operating between Cleveland and Wellington, and on February 18, 1851, the last two rails between Cleveland and Columbus were laid by Kelley, president of the railroad, and Mayor William Case, of Cleveland. After the last spike had been driven, a cannon shot was fired, and the first train from Columbus to Cleveland passed toward its destination.⁴⁸ Thereafter railroad transportation between Cleveland and Cincinnati was possible via the Cleveland-Columbus line (149 miles), the Columbus-Xenia road (54 miles), and the Little Miami road (65 miles). By April, 1851, fast trains were running between Cleveland and Cincinnati.

By 1851, an eighteen-mile branch of the Mad River and Lake Erie Railroad (from Carey to Findlay) had been completed as well as a twenty-four-mile branch from Springfield to Dayton. By March of the same year the Cleveland and Pittsburgh Railroad (completed in 1852) was running from the former city to Ravenna, thirty-eight miles distant. At the end of the year the Cleveland, Painesville and Ashtabula Railroad (Alfred Kelley, president) was operating from Cleveland to Painesville, and progress was being made westward from Cleveland with the building of the Cleveland, Norwalk and Toledo Railroad (both of which were to become parts of the Lake Shore line of the New York Central System).

Laws for the protection of the railroads of Ohio had been passed on March 18, 1839, and March 20, 1840. Both provided penalties for the malicious destruction of railroad property or the placing of obstructions on the tracks. The later law established the severe penalty of a \$500 fine or imprisonment in the county jail

⁴⁸ *Cleveland Daily True Democrat*, Feb. 19, 22, 1851.



MAP 9. RAILROADS IN OPERATION, MARCH, 1851

Based upon a map in Henry Howe, *Historical Collections of Ohio* (Cincinnati, 1852), and upon research in county histories and contemporary newspapers. The Erie and Kalamazoo Railroad, from Toledo to Adrian, Michigan, was largely within the bounds of Michigan and is not shown on this map.

for thirty days on bread and water.⁴⁹ In 1840 the "Plunder Law" of 1837 was repealed, and thereafter the State of Ohio extended no money or credit toward the building of railroads. An act of February 4, 1848, however, gave the railroads of the State enlarged powers to borrow money, issue and sell bonds, and mortgage their income and property in order to raise necessary funds. The State, with its huge canal debt, was too much burdened with obligations to reestablish the principles of the "Plunder Law," but as it became evident that the railroads had come to stay and would contribute vitally to the economic development of Ohio, local units were solicited for aid. The belief prevailed that some public assistance was necessary and that the smaller governmental units were near enough to projects to protect the investments of public money. Accordingly, nearly every company was able to obtain authorization for the subscription to its stock by counties and cities upon a favorable vote of a majority of the people. Inevitably this led in some instances to unfortunate consequences.

In the meantime some steps had been taken toward the regulation of the railroads. An act of March 7, 1842, was so severe as to tend to discourage railroad investment, and was repealed March 12, 1845. A law of 1848 permitted railroads in Ohio to charge not over three and a half cents a mile for passengers and not over five cents a ton per mile for distances of thirty miles or more for freight. For shorter distances a "reasonable" rate was required.⁵⁰ The movement toward consolidation was inevitable, and an act of March 3, 1851, provided for a union into a single new corporation if two or more companies of continuous lines entered into such an agreement. The law implied, however, that the consent of all stockholders was necessary or, in case the consent of some could not be obtained, that their stock could be purchased from them at par. Another act, March 20, 1851, gave city councils the right to regulate the speed of a railroad locomotive through the city, provid-

⁴⁹ Ohio Laws, Statutes, etc., *Statutes of the State of Ohio* (ed. by J. R. Swan, Columbus, 1841), 140-1.

⁵⁰ H. L. Kerlin, "History of the Railroads that Entered Toledo before the Civil War," M. A. thesis, Ohio State University, 1938, 11-2.

ing that the rate required be not less than four miles per hour. In 1851, the new constitution of Ohio made significant changes of great and enduring importance in the relation of the State to railroads and other corporations.⁵¹

⁵¹ Ohio Laws, Statutes, etc., *Acts*, 49 Assemb., 1851, 95, 112.

CHAPTER V

Recreation and Sociability

IN THE days of relative simplicity before 1850, recreation was generally informal and uncommercialized. People were invariably acquainted with such neighbors as were mutually agreeable, and the inevitable contacts of every-day life made possible easy arrangements for playtime diversions of varied types. Recreation, however, was not rigidly separated from the world of labor, and work and play often blended in a unity unattained or unattainable in a more specialized economic order. Much of the enjoyment of life, moreover, was found in uncommercialized activities in the home, the school, and the church.

Families were large, and in isolated neighborhoods constituted a fairly self-sufficient social unit. In southern Ohio, Duncan McArthur, governor from 1830 to 1832, had three sons and five daughters, and in northern Ohio, Joshua R. Giddings, congressman from 1838 to 1859, had three sons and two daughters.¹ The numbers in these families were fairly typical of the homes of the prosperous, and at a time when early marriages were the rule, families of fifteen children were not uncommon. Sometimes, when the oldest child might be marrying at the age of twenty-three, younger brothers and sisters were still arriving at intervals of one or two years.² Under such circumstances, the older children often combined work and play by caring for the younger members of the household and frolicking with them at the same time. Boys on the farm were apt to find an interest in the daily routine of the place as well as in the more unusual activities of butchering, splitting rails, and fencing the fields.

¹ C. H. Cramer, "The Career of Duncan McArthur," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 1931; Giddings MSS.

² James Heaton to C. H. Morrell, near Middletown, Ohio, Aug. 1823, Heaton MSS. (in Library of Congress).



11. TYPICAL HOME, WESTERN RESERVE, NEAR PAINESVILLE

Courtesy of Frank J. Roos, Jr.

When a young couple was about to be married, the whole countryside frequently turned out for the house-raising and accomplished the task in a cooperative way, and in a spirit of fun and sport. In the summer and fall, threshings, huskings, and similar activities served as occasions for neighborhood get-togethers, the men performing the primary task while their wives indoors chatted over their quilting or similar activities. The men often accomplished their labor with zest, for the division of workers into teams infused a spirit of competition which insured a rapid completion of the job. Supper followed, after which the evening might be whiled away in dancing, unless a strict religious code dictated the substitution of games, which sometimes were enlivened by the payment of forfeits in kisses.³

³W. C. Howells, *Recollections of Life in Ohio from 1813 to 1840* (Cincinnati, 1895), 144-51.

Children in the springtime found pleasure in roaming the woods to gather wild flowers, such as spring-beauties, violets, bluebells, and columbine. Honey deposited in the trunks of trees was looked upon as hidden treasure, but in the woods one had to be careful of the hornets and yellow-jackets. Boys and, less frequently, their sisters and parents, found time for swimming and fishing. In the late summer and early fall the gathering of wild grapes and gooseberries, and of hickory-nuts, walnuts, and butternuts, enlivened the schoolless Saturdays. Hunting was more definitely an activity of men and boys, although girls sometimes became both excellent riders and rifleshots. By 1825 wolves and bears were found infrequently, and deer were disappearing rapidly, but wild turkeys, geese, ducks, squirrel, quail, and partridge, and sometimes raccoons and foxes were targets for the sportsman's shot.⁴

Even the children who lived in the towns and villages were often not too remote from rural life to visit the farms of relatives or tenants three or four times a year to enjoy the activities of the maple-sugar or cherry-picking season, the making of cider and apple butter, and the gathering of nuts. Rutherford B. Hayes later recalled the colored eggs filled with sugar which were given to his sister and him at Easter and the pet birds, squirrels and rabbits bestowed upon them at other times by the tenants on the family farm north of Delaware.⁵

Marriages, funerals, parties, and courtships were occasions for social gatherings in the home and added to the significance of the family as a social unit. On the night of a wedding, since there were few bridal trips, a "belling," or charivari, would take place. The following day a family dinner, the infare, would be held at the home of the groom. Much merriment was derived from the custom of requiring an older brother or sister who had failed to marry before a younger one to dance in the hog-trough.⁶

Also important as a center of social intercourse was the village

⁴ W. H. Venable, *A Buckeye Boyhood* (Cincinnati, 1911), 31-4.

⁵ C. R. Williams, *Life of Rutherford B. Hayes* (Boston, 1914), I, 15-6.

⁶ Martin Welker, *Farm Life in Central Ohio Sixty Years Ago* (Wooster, 1892), 60.

store. A few whiled away some time each day in this popular resort, but especially on Saturdays it was a thriving mercantile exchange, and its atmosphere buzzed with the gossip of the countryside. Lodges and similar fraternal organizations in many communities contributed to the social life of the vicinity. Masonic organizations, of which there were three in Cincinnati in 1825, were especially important. Fifty-nine subordinate lodges were represented at the Grand Lodge of Ohio in 1830, but the antimasonic fury caused some to disband, at least temporarily. The Independent Order of Odd-Fellows was next in importance before 1850 among fraternal bodies.

For the young the school rivaled the home as a center of social activity. In the period before school, at recesses, and during the lunch period, games were a natural outlet for youthful energy. Pupils of various ages played scatter base, prisoner's base, stink base, poison, wood-dog and old witch. The older boys found fun in three corner cat and town ball. The latter was an early type of baseball, employing a ball made by taking a core of India rubber, wrapping it with strong woolen yarn wound into a tight mass, and having a shoemaker cover the whole with leather. In winter of course snowballs and breastworks of snow and ice permitted expression of the pugnacious spirit of the growing boys.⁷

Now and then, on designated nights, the older people of the community would be attracted to the schoolhouse by a spelling-bee, and great would be the hilarity when a proud citizen would be eliminated from the contest by missing a word such as *demesne*, or *onomatopoeia*. Sometimes there were debating societies where arguments were heard on topics such as, "Which is the more destructive element, fire or water?" and "Who was the greater general, Julius Caesar or Napoleon Bonaparte?" During the winter months a singing school might also break the monotony of the evening hours.⁸

The churches offered opportunities for those of all ages to make

⁷ Venable, *Buckeye Boyhood*, 125ff.

⁸ Delaware (Ohio) *Patron*, Jan. 10, 1828.



12. TOWER OF CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, TALLMADGE
Erected in 1822. Courtesy of Frank J. Roos, Jr.

social contacts. Revivals and camp-meetings, moreover, were especial occasions for emotional release. One rather liberal Protestant church, far from typical of Protestant churches in general, held weekly social meetings with dancing, cards, and refreshments as a part of the evening's activities. In Catholic parishes occasionally fairs, attended also by non-Catholics, catered to the gaming spirit, chances being sold upon chairs, ottomans, flutes, vases, and smaller articles. Many Protestants frowned upon such functions, which nevertheless were sometimes crowded almost to the point of suffocation.⁹

For many people no amusement was more alluring than dancing to such music as the fiddler provided. The favorite tunes were apt to be the "Devil's Dream" and "Fisher's Hornpipe," and the principal dances were French Four, the jig, and the Virginia reel. For those who preferred not to dance there were such games as Sister Phoebe, hunting the thimble, pussy wants a corner, and marching to Quebec.

Coon hunting and bee hunting were favorite diversions for some, and among the more prosperous there was some fox-hunting with the use of hounds. Cock-fighting was probably more prevalent in southern than in northern Ohio, and horse-races, especially at harvest time as part of an autumn festival, had their enthusiastic supporters. At picnics, barbecues, and similar gatherings, foot-racing, jumping, wrestling, and the pitching of quoits were common forms of entertainment.

Militia musters were occasions for respite from ordinary toil even for those who were not enrolled in the service, and other special seasons were times for extraordinary means of recreation. Thus, about the time of the Christmas holidays a shooting and raffling match was often held. During the day interest centered in shooting at targets, and at night articles upon which chances had been sold would be raffled off. Later in the evening those in attendance might play cards for money. On the night before New-year it

⁹ Ophia D. Smith, *Life and Times of Giles Richards* (Columbus, 1936), 89 note, 96-7.

was common for a party of masked men to go from house to house waking up the occupants by a volley from their guns. Then, they would cry, "Happy New-year," and would generally receive an invitation to enter the house for refreshments.¹⁰

As the State became more populous, the larger towns were visited each summer by a circus with riders, clowns, and a small menagerie, consisting perhaps of monkeys, ponies, and an elephant. In Cincinnati, in December, 1828, announcement was made of exhibitions for about three months of a menagerie composed of a lion, a lioness (said to be the only full-grown one in America), a zebu, leopard, cougar, wolf, bear, and apes. This was supplemented by "sports of the ring," featuring Indian and Shetland pony riders, at an admission charge of twenty-five cents for adults and half-price for children.¹¹

A social order absorbed in the conquering of a wilderness was necessarily engrossed in material things, and most Ohioans before 1850 spent little time in reading secular books of permanent value. Almanacs, the Bible, perhaps a few religious books or volumes pertaining to military characters, and the newspapers, generally sufficed. Yet, there were always those of cultured background and substantial education who found enjoyment in the best literature. As wealth increased and scholastic advantages multiplied, this became more noticeable. Such a person as Thomas Ewing wrote of his delight in Rousseau's writings though he cared less for French poetry.¹² Senator Benjamin Tappan's journal indicates that he read regularly from such authors as Jonathan Swift, François Rabelais, and James Fenimore Cooper. Rutherford B. Hayes' sister Fanny as a girl of ten at Delaware was devouring a two-volume history of England and had committed to memory all of *The Lady of the Lake* and a great part of *Lalla Rookh*. At twelve she had covered practically all of the plays of Shakespeare and had selected her

¹⁰ Welker, *Farm Life in Central Ohio*, 50ff.

¹¹ Cincinnati Gazette, Dec. 15, 1828.

¹² Thomas Ewing to Mrs. King, Lancaster, Ohio, Dec. 9, 1822, Ewing MSS. (in Library of Congress).

favorites to be read and reread. As a young man in Columbus in 1842-3, Hayes himself spent some of his spare time in the study of logic and German as well as legal writings like those of Blackstone and Chillingworth.¹³ In the larger towns some of the young men and women read the works of Sir Walter Scott, Thomas Carlyle, Charles Dickens, and Charlotte Brontë, as well as those of such American authors as Ralph Waldo Emerson and George Bancroft. The best periodicals, such as the British journals (*London Review*, *Westminster Review*, and the *Edinburgh Review*), those published in the East, and those appearing in Cincinnati itself, were available at the Cincinnati bookstores during the 1840's.¹⁴ Many fairly prosperous families both in town and country spent part of the long winter evenings around the fireplace, the mother knitting while the father or daughter read aloud from one of Dickens' novels. In families well supplied with books, the three-year-old youngster had his *Mother Goose*, *Dame Wiggins of Lee*, and *Timothy Dump*. A girl of eight might possess a box of inexpensive paints with which to tint the wood-cuts in Mrs. Lydia Huntley Sigourney's *Pictorial Reader*. The growing boy who craved action stories was apt to be engrossed in the *History of the Expedition under the Command of Captains Lewis and Clark*, *Travels of Bruce*, *Travels of Mungo Park*, and the *Life and Voyages of Captain Cook*. Soon he would be reading *Robinson Crusoe*, *Gulliver's Travels*, and *Pilgrim's Progress*, and with increasing maturity, perhaps Plutarch's *Lives* and Charles Rollin's *Ancient History of the Egyptians, Carthaginians, Assyrians . . .* (in eight volumes).¹⁵

Many of course were not content with the quiet relaxation of the fireside and sought stimulation in the conviviality of the coffee-houses and taverns. Legislators in Columbus spent some of the long winter evenings away from home in stag wine parties with games of faro and roulette as added diversions.¹⁶ One coffee-house

¹³ C. R. Williams, *Life of R. B. Hayes*, I, 15-6, 29.

¹⁴ Smith, *Life of Giles Richards*, 104 note.

¹⁵ Venable, *Buckeye Boyhood*, 135ff.

¹⁶ I. A. Jewett to Samuel Appleton, Columbus, Feb. 22, 1833, in A. E. Lee, *History of the City of Columbus* (New York, 1892), I, 731-2.

in Columbus was so popular as to be frequented by practically every prominent male citizen except Dr. James Hoge, esteemed pastor of the First Presbyterian Church. Coffee, of course, was not the principal beverage, for a ready addiction to liquor was common to a large portion of the people. Even in a community of New England antecedents, *e.g.*, Granville, Licking County, there were six distilleries in operation in 1827, and seventeen hundred inhabitants of the township consumed about ten thousand gallons of whiskey each year. It was customary, moreover, for farmers to exchange a load of corn at the distillery for a barrel of whiskey.

Ex-senator Jacob Burnet wrote in 1837 that he had been for several years the last survivor of nine resident lawyers in Cincinnati in 1796, all the rest of whom had become "confirmed sots" (except for one who had died of tuberculosis) and had gone to untimely graves.¹⁷ When Charles Hammond, the distinguished Cincinnati journalist died in 1840, his assistant paid glowing tribute to his ability and influence, but recognized his weakness in the face of the temptation of drink:

"Strong passions, spurning at control
Debasing appetites that gave
A galling fetter to his soul
Made him their slave."

It was asserted on good authority, however, in 1826 that drunkenness was less common in Cincinnati than in the East, perhaps because the climate was "unfavorable to the longevity of drunkards."¹⁸ Within the next few years, moreover, considerable headway was made in Ohio in relation to temperance. Joshua R. Giddings referred to such a change among the legislators at Columbus in 1837:

"But Columbus is greatly changed since I last visited it. No member [of the assembly] or other gentleman is willing now to be

¹⁷ [Jacob] Burnet, "Letters," Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio, *Transactions* (Cincinnati), vol. I, pt. 2 (1839), 13.

¹⁸ Benjamin Drake and E. D. Mansfield, *Cincinnati in 1826* (Cincinnati, 1826), 89.

seen with liquor on his table whereas in old times no one was willing to be seen without it. The subject of temperance has certainly made great progress in this place. But I fear while the vice of intemperance has *decreased* others have increased. The theatre now occupies the leisure hours of most of the members during the long evenings. But few of them are found in their rooms or attending to business. . . . They rise at breakfast, sit around and read the news till half past ten o'clock, then go to the house and sit one hour and adjourn to three o'clock at which time they again repair to the state house and remain another hour and adjourn over to the next day."¹⁹

The use of tobacco was nearly universal among men, and the few who found its smoke really objectionable and remonstrated accordingly, were apt to receive less than courteous attention from the "interminable smokers." The chewing of tobacco and the use of cigars and pipes were not uncommon among women, especially in the rural districts.

Sexual vice as in other generations, was far from unknown, although the prevalence of early marriages, the cruel stigma attached to illegitimacy, and the protective influences thrown around girls of gentle rearing tended to secure adherence to a rigid moral code. Yet, in Cincinnati conditions were such that in February, 1832, the Ohio legislature passed a special act for Hamilton County, prescribing a fine of \$50 to \$500 and imprisonment in the county jail on bread and water for not more than thirty days as a penalty for operating a house of prostitution. Other penalties were provided for inmates and others associated with such houses. The prevailing concern for feminine virtue is illustrated by Giddings' counsel to his daughter:

"I beg you will bear in mind that intelligence and virtue are the only legitimate distinctions acknowledged in our country. It is therefore our duty to exert every effort to obtain intelligence and we ought sooner to part with life than to stain our character with a *suspicion*. Females therefore in particular should guard their

¹⁹ Joshua R. Giddings to his wife, Columbus, Jan. 26, 1837, Giddings MSS.

reputation with an unerring ever watchful jealousy. I make these remarks in consequence of your statement that you attend singing schools during the evening."²⁰

All girls, however, did not have about them the safeguarding restraints that were present in the Giddings family; and, at best, to err was a human tendency. William Henry Harrison, after he had grown children was widely charged with seducing a young girl, and even his friends recognized his amorous inclinations as his besetting sin.²¹ The private letters of prominent Ohioans of the time indicate that some of their associates were involved in "affairs" with women, and one religious-minded person declared in 1828 that some of the small villages of Ohio were "but sinks of vice."²² It was often "the woman who paid" for the transgression of moral standards, as is indicated by the fate of a young widow in Cincinnati in 1827:

"The lady in question is a kind of Magdalene. Some ten years ago or more her husband, an officer in the army, died here and left her young, beautiful, accomplished, with one infant child and no relative. She fell into the hands of a . . . married man. Their fooleries were extraordinary and ridiculous. Still she retained a half-forbidden station in society. After a time her mother, with other daughters came here to reside. The intrigue has long been given up and the lady devotes herself with unwearied zeal to the performance of all the charities of life. She is nurse and drudge for all her acquaintances when sick. She is at everybody's command to aid at funerals and is teacher of a Sunday School and organist for our church when no one else can be had. But evidently broken in spirit and in health."²³

In rural Ohio before 1850, class distinctions were relatively unknown or unemphasized. Variations in wealth, however, were never wanting. A visitor to the home of Thomas Worthington two

²⁰ *Id.* to Laura Giddings, Washington, Jan. 7, 1840, *ibid.*

²¹ William Doherty to Ethan A. Brown, Jan. 29, 1825, Brown MSS. (in Ohio State Library, Columbus).

²² Hannah Baker to C. M. Heaton, Monroe, Ohio, June 4, 1828, Heaton MSS.

²³ F. P. Weisenburger, *Life of Charles Hammond* (Columbus, 1934), 41.



13. WILLIAM RENICK HOME, NEAR CIRCLEVILLE

An example of the southern influence in Ohio architecture; built in 1832. Courtesy of Frank J. Roos, Jr.

miles from Chillicothe in 1826 commented on his extensive property with the house "constructed in the style of an Italian villa." On one side was a terrace with flowers and kitchen vegetables cultivated by his German gardeners.²⁴ Here, Worthington's daughter, Sarah, who had married a son of the well-known Rufus King of New York maintained a kind of cultivated salon, but about the time of her father's death in 1826, she and her husband removed to Cincinnati. Worthington owned 15,000 acres of land and many town lots and although he owed about \$40,000, his estate was valued conservatively at \$150,000. Near Chillicothe lived Duncan McArthur who had extensive land claims and who received about \$80,000 in compensation from Congress for the surrender of claims

²⁴ Karl Bernhard, Duke of Saxe-Weimar, *Travels through North America during the Years 1825 and 1826* (Philadelphia, 1828), II, 149-50.

to fourteen thousand acres of land in west central Ohio (1830). In 1832 McArthur had loaned at interest in Ohio over \$29,000 and in Kentucky almost \$2,800. Mrs. McArthur, however, cared little for formal society, preferring her home and church, and in 1824 McArthur himself had been so disgusted with the fashionable life of Washington and especially with the seemingly immodest female attire that he had written his daughter that the city was the last place in which he would "wish to see a wife, daughter, or female relation." Yet, even such a man was desirous that his daughter should marry some one personally comparable to those who had married the daughters of the Worthingtons.²⁵

Such families, however, were relatively few, as were those persons at the opposite end of the economic scale, the paupers, 2,513 of whom received some or total support from the State in 1850. Even in log cabins there were women who had brought with them to their pioneer homes muslins imported from Britain or silk dresses suitable for festive wear, but such possessions did not constitute a social barrier to their homespun neighbors. In a rural community, the necessity for cooperation and the desire for sociability, regardless of differences in capabilities, insured a relatively democratic society. In political life no rule of court etiquette restrained the humblest citizen from approaching the governor of the State or the head of a department without an introduction or even a card.²⁶ Similarly, in social life, in most Ohio communities, an easy informality reigned supreme. Perhaps the following is a fairly accurate impression of life in such a community as Etna, Licking County, before 1850:

"There was no class founded on wealth, no one distinguished by either learning, ancestry, achievement, or pretentious estate,—we were all on the same level, wore the same home-made clothes, read or studied in dimly lighted rooms or by the light of wood fires, looked each other in the face when we met at each other's doors,

²⁵ Memorandum and letters dated May 10, 1832, Feb. 6, 1824, and Jan. 9, 1825, McArthur MSS.

²⁶ Caleb Atwater, "Address," *Ohio State Journal*, July 5, 1827.

all unconscious of that restless kingdom known as society, and in blessed, happy ignorance of what is now called refinement and culture."²⁷

With the development of the larger cities, however, and with the attendant increase in material and cultural advantages, more marked social differentiation was to be expected. Ambitious young men from the East were coming to the West, not merely to gain a livelihood for themselves but to excel in a social and professional way. When Salmon P. Chase announced his intention of locating in Cincinnati he declared, "I would rather be *first* in Cincinnati than in Baltimore twenty years hence. And as I have ever been first at school and college (except at Dartmouth where I was an idle goose) I shall strive to be first wherever I may be."²⁸

In reality, the spirit of equality was passing in the larger cities of Ohio, notably in Cincinnati, where social prestige carried a certain weight in political circles. Thus one candidate for the Ohio House of Representatives from Hamilton County complained that his humble origin was being used against him:

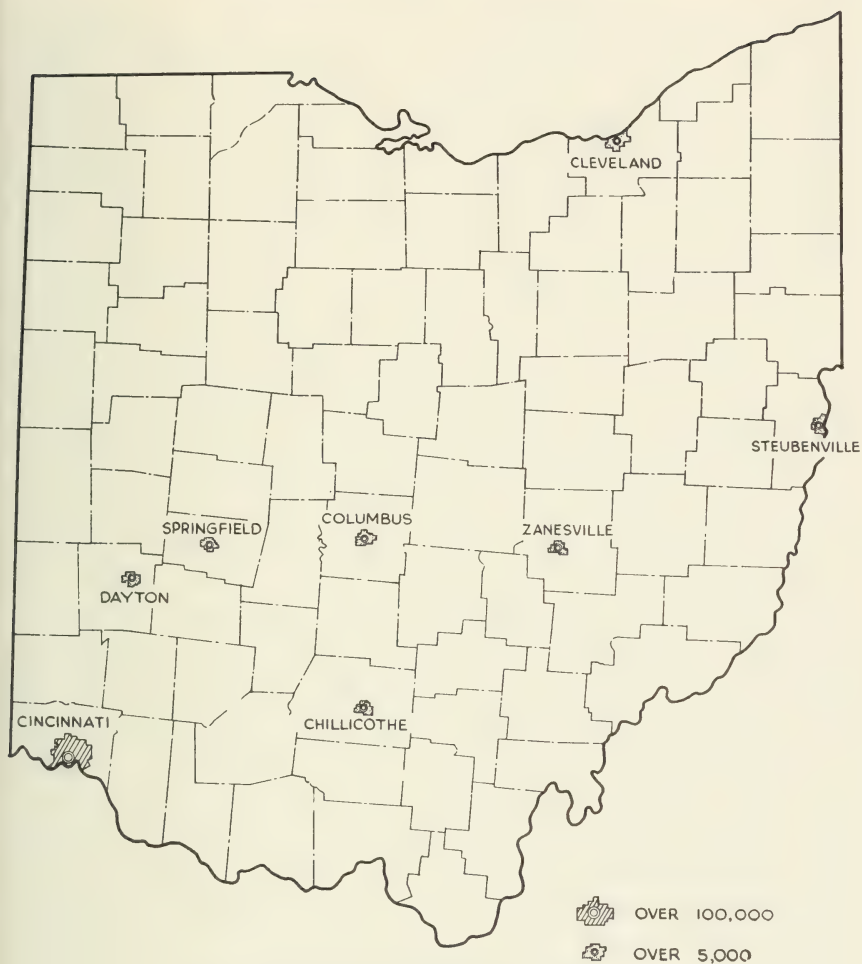
"That I peddled cakes in your market some three or four years ago, is very true. But what of all this? Was there anything criminal or dishonest in the matter? Had I come to the city in costly attire, attended parties, drunk wine, played the gentleman upon empty pockets, and cheated my tailors out of their bills, then I suppose I should have held a conspicuous rank among the *beau monde*, and have been considered a man of the first water."²⁹

In general, however, the business men of the community were too much engrossed in practical affairs to pay much regard to real or fancied social barriers. Indeed, one traveler, accustomed to the standards of European society, complained that the city of Cincinnati proved especially delightful to those who preferred work to everything else and was intolerable to those "with taste for pleasure or interest in the fine arts." Men of leisure, he found, were

²⁷ Morris Schaff, *Etna and Kirkersville* (Boston, 1905), 31.

²⁸ S. P. Chase to C. D. Cleveland, Washington, Feb. 8, 1830, Chase MSS. (in Library of Congress).

²⁹ Cincinnati *Gazette*, Oct. 6, 1831.



MAP 10. THE CHIEF CITIES OF OHIO IN 1850

looked upon as on the high road to aristocracy, hence all united in "condemning pleasure, luxury, gallantry, the fine arts themselves."³⁰ The men of the community were in fact so absorbed with economic matters that this was given as one reason for the extent

³⁰ Michel Chevalier, *Society, Manners, and Politics in the U. S.* (Boston, 1839), 205-6.

to which women predominated in the churches. But, even in a community devoted to work there were always men who craved refined relaxation, and women who desired a place in the "world of fashion." As early as 1825 a prominent Columbus matron noted that greater emphasis was being placed in that city upon dress and that a woman of prominence would not be seen on the street unless she had "on a leghorn hat and a cross or figured silk or Lafayette calico, or something as fine."³¹ In 1826, the fashionable set in Cincinnati was said to be similar to the "same class in the eastern cities, with an equal amount of refinement, if not a like degree of useless etiquette." During the winter public balls, assemblies, and cotillion parties were held, and private parties, "both frequently and elegantly given," offered cards, music, dancing, and conversation as the leading means of amusement.³² Such parties, often held in expensively furnished homes, were attended by a noticeable effort to display cultivation and hence by some measure of self-consciousness and pedantry.

In Cincinnati the leadership in social affairs was assumed in large part by former New Englanders,³³ although men and women who had lived in Kentucky and Virginia added gaiety to many social gatherings. Dinner engagements, social calls, and activities sponsored by church organizations helped to pass the time for those who had acquired a preferred economic position. By 1840, as a consequence, a rather careful attention to dress had developed among the wives and daughters of the prosperous. Letters of the ladies of the younger set were filled with references to bustles, cardinals (a short cloak with hood), tunics, sunshades, veils, and shawls. When one young lady made a call in a new outfit, her clothes were particularly observed, attired as she was in a "splendid stone colored rep silk with a narrow stripe of brown, and a wide flounce round the bottom. A very handsome pocket handkerchief with thread lace, a worked collar with wide lace and a new cameo

³¹ Lee, *History of Columbus*, I, 271.

³² Drake and Mansfield, *Cincinnati in 1826*, 90.

³³ Judge [A. G. W.] Carter, *The Old Court House* (Cincinnati, 1880), 120-1.

pin with a tortoise shell and pearl cardcase" and a hat of "very fine tuscan braid, trimmed with rich plaid ribbon" completed her costume. When a music teacher from New York visited in Cincinnati, dressed in black watered silk with a satin stripe and a large French worked collar, and with a velvet studded ribbon around her throat, a gold chain round her neck, silver and pearl pins in her hair, a cameo pin on her breast, a bracelet set with a topaz and accompanied by a lock and chain, a lynx muff and a broadcloth coat with a lynx collar and a cape extending below her knees she definitely created a sensation.³⁴

Social activity in Cincinnati as elsewhere was somewhat restricted by religious scruples. Some people frowned upon the playing of cards and upon dancing, and a quiet observance of the Sabbath was held to be desirable by many prosperous and influential churchgoers.

Visitors to Cincinnati rarely missed the opportunity of visiting the Western Museum. The proprietor, Joseph Dorfeuille, was sincerely interested in the sciences and had collected many archaeological specimens and scientific curiosities, but the task of filling up the museum and the uncultivated status of popular taste gradually caused much "trumpery" to be included in the exhibits. As one entered the museum, one was apt to see Dorfeuille himself, perhaps engaged in conversation with the talkative Frenchwoman who took tickets at the lower staircase. An appropriate mood was stimulated in the visitors by a large hand organ which sent forth "unearthly but by no means heavenly music." In 1826, the displays had been chiefly scientific—birds, fishes, fossils, minerals, botanical specimens, medals, coins; the remains of such animals as the mammoth, the arctic elephant, and the megalonix; and specimens of Egyptian, Mexican and American antiquities. There were also cosmoramic views of American scenery and buildings and various specimens of the fine arts including a "fine transparency" representing the Battle of New Orleans. The tattooed head of a New Zealand chief added a gruesome note. Lectures were given to ex-

³⁴ Smith, *Life of Giles Richards*, 36, 92, 101.

plain the chief items of interest.³⁵ Within a few years popular taste had stimulated the inclusion of such items as a moss-covered fountain, a "real" mermaid, the bludgeon which allegedly had killed Captain James Cook, rusty keys from Cave-in-the-Rocks (a robber's den in southern Illinois), fragments of the exploded boiler of the Ohio River steamer *Moselle*, and pictures of Asiatic temples. Wax figures portrayed President Andrew Jackson, Tecumseh, Black Hawk, and Napoleon on horseback; Aaron Burr in the act of shooting Alexander Hamilton; George Washington on his death-bed; the Sleeping Beauty with the Prince bending over her; and a local notoriety, Cowan, in the act of killing his wife with an ax, the children, already murdered, lying on the floor near-by. Even more realistic was the head of one Hoover, a murderer, the gruesome relic being preserved in a huge jar of alcohol.

Each evening the top floor of the museum was opened to visitors for a "half-terrifying, half-grotesque" portrayal of Hades. The original conception of waxwork and scenic background had been developed by Hiram Powers and a French painter, Hervieu. Powers had benefited by previous experience in a clock and organ factory and from 1829 to 1834 was employed in image-making at the museum. His wife aided him in contriving extraordinary clock-like mechanisms by which "Satan" and other wax monsters were made to move in the "Chamber of Horrors." The result was such a realistic exhibition as to cause country boys visiting there to feel that they had experienced the most exciting occasion of their lives. Within the shadowy bounds of the infernal regions were seen flaming lakes of brimstone and peaks of ice, skeletons walking about, red-eyed imps, and black devils tormenting lost souls. Satan himself appeared as a likeable old fork-tailed creature in red tights, who good-naturedly welcomed the visitors to the kingdom of the damned, expressing his pleasure at the sight of the large group of fine people. He indulged in comical antics and jocular allusions to local persons and places so as to induce much merriment. Sin was a realistic wax creature which without warning would spring

³⁵ Drake and Mansfield, *Cincinnati in 1826*, 44-6.

at some visitor, at the same time emitting a blood-curdling shriek. As the visitor at one place stepped on innocent-appearing iron plates in the floor, a startling electric shock was administered by the metallic grating which he touched in peering through to see the show.³⁶

Many religious people were emphatically opposed to the theater as a worldly and even immoral institution. In the years around 1815, Joshua L. Wilson, aggressive and influential pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Cincinnati, had thundered against dramatic presentations in that community, and his views were the vocalized expression of the sentiments of many devout souls. At a time when church-members were occasionally suspended from affiliation for "worldliness," even those of none too clear personal convictions were apt to be circumspect in their conduct. It is said that Harriet Beecher Stowe who resided in Cincinnati from 1832 to 1850 never attended the theater until she ventured to see a dramatized version of her *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, after her removal to the East.

Yet, a theater had existed in Cincinnati as early as 1801, and performances had been given thereafter from time to time. In 1819 thirty or forty persons had become interested in the erection of a suitable building on Columbia Street, but with the economic depression that followed, in 1825 it passed by public sale into the hands of two individuals. The structure had, besides the part set aside for the performers, a pit, two tiers of boxes, a large gallery, commodious lobbies, and a "punch room."³⁷ Improvements were contemplated to insure the comfort of eight hundred persons. Such performances as "Wild Oats," and "Flying Dutchman," were given in 1826 and 1827. Late in the latter year when Junius Brutus Booth, father of Edwin Booth, appeared in the roles of Othello, Bertram, Sir Edward Mortimer, and Richard III, he was ably supported by Mrs. Alexander Drake, but the miserable weather reduced the attendance materially. The Drakes were a family of

³⁶ Venable, *Buckeye Boyhood*, 81-3.

³⁷ Drake and Mansfield, *Cincinnati in 1826*, 29-30.

talented actors who often played in Cincinnati, and the status of the profession is indicated by the desperate economic struggle which they experienced. A visitor to their quarters behind the scenes during the daytime might notice a helmet half full of boiled potatoes or one of Macbeth's daggers being used to stir roasting coffee. In an attempt to relieve the plight of the theatrical people, frequent "benefit" performances were given for both players and managers. A few outstanding stars fared somewhat better, and when Junius Booth in 1828 again appeared in the time-honored tragedies as many as a hundred persons were turned away. After the custom of the period, even when Booth starred in *Richard III* or *King Lear*, these plays were followed on the same program by a farce.³⁸

During 1829 the famed Edwin Forrest appeared in Cincinnati in such plays as *Damon and Pythias*, *The Virginians*, *Hamlet*, and *William Tell*. In the same year Louisa Lane (later Mrs. John Drew) delighted her audiences by portraying five or six different characters in *Actress of All Work* and *12 Precisely*. During the summer an old "bath-house" on Sycamore Street was transformed into a "Dramatic-Equestrian Theatre" by the addition of a circus ring and a stage. For a short time a combination of dramatic and equestrian performances was given. The unusual production proved generally more popular than the strictly classical, and *Paul Jones*, elaborately presented with a "full-rigged ship" and a "rough sea" was followed by *Cherry and Fair Star* (featuring an eastern galley with silken sails and streamers, and new Oriental costumes) and by *The Forest of Bondy*, in which the proprietor's dog, Nero, had a part.

In July, 1832, Globe and Caldwell's New Cincinnati Theatre, with Grecian columns, well-lighted vestibule, and rich furnishings, opened with performances of the *Soldier's Daughter* and the comic opera, *No Song, No Supper*. During 1833, the Citizens' Theatre (formerly the Columbia Street Theatre) reduced its prices, pro-

³⁸ G. C. Harris, "History of the Theatre in Ohio, 1815-1850," M. A. thesis, Ohio State University, 1937.

hibited smoking, engaged officers to maintain order and installed stoves to insure warmth. The burning of the Citizens' Theatre in 1834, and of the New Cincinnati in 1836, resulted in a scarcity of theatrical offerings for a time; but in July, 1837, the National Theatre, costing \$40,000 and with a stage larger than that of the Drury Lane (London) was opened. It was "richly decorated with chandeliers and paintings and curtains."³⁹ An orchestra director and costume designer were employed, with a police officer on duty at all times to preserve decorum. Prices ranged from twenty-five cents to a dollar, with fifty-cent seats reserved for Negroes in the center gallery. Mrs. Shaw, a popular star of the time, soon filled an engagement of Shakespearian plays, and during the mask-ball scene from *Much Ado about Nothing*, all gentlemen who secured an additional ticket were permitted to promenade the stage.

After 1838, for about five years the theater in Cincinnati was none too prosperous. Soup kitchens operating in the city in 1843 indicated that hard times were affecting the general public, and during that summer Shire's People's Theatre reduced its prices to twenty cents for box seats and ten cents for those in the pit. From 1844 to 1850, tragedians like William C. Macready, Edwin Forrest, Junius B. Booth, and Charles Mason appeared on the Cincinnati stage, with Mrs. Alexander Drake and Julia Turnbull in the prominent feminine roles. In 1847, Julia Dean, talented daughter of Julia Drake and grand-daughter of Samuel Drake, patriarch of the western stage, played a leading part in *The Hunchback*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Lucretia Borgia*; and Barney Williams, a favorite Irish comedian, included a benefit performance for the suffering poor of Ireland. From time to time dancing troupes performed, including one company of forty-eight children.

Actors in Cincinnati served sometimes also as managers and even as dramatists. Cornelius Ambrosius Logan served in all these capacities. As an actor he played the role of Sir Peter Teazle in *The School for Scandal* and the role of Peter Simpson in *Simpson*

³⁹ Letter of Sept. 29, 1837, in J. E. Bradford, ed., *Education in the Ohio Valley Prior to 1840* (Columbus, 1916), 10-1.

and Company so often that in ordinary life he was called Peter Logan by people who did not know that this was not his real name.⁴⁰ Another actor and dramatist was Charles Gayler, whose first and very timely play *The Buckeye Gold Hunters*, ran for ten weeks in 1849 at the National Theatre.⁴¹

Aside from the types already mentioned, two specialized kinds of stage entertainment were very popular in Cincinnati, those dealing with Yankee and with negro characters. As early as 1837, the "down East" Yankee had been portrayed by both George H. Hill and James H. Hackett in such plays as *The Yankee in Spain* and *The Yankee in England*. A pioneer in such a role was Danforth Marble who had gained tremendous popularity in Buffalo in the title role of *Sam Patch*. In this play he jumped forty feet into the swirling waters of Niagara—to the immense delight of a western audience.

Negro impersonations had been presented in Cincinnati even before 1830. It has been claimed that the first actor to portray a negro character on the stage was the later renowned Edwin Forrest who in 1823 took the part of a Negro in an original farce, *The Tailor in Distress*, presented in Cincinnati. Thomas Dartmouth Rice, sometimes called "the father of American minstrelsy," however, contributed most to the development of the "black-faced" artistry.⁴² In 1828-9 he appeared in Cincinnati in an original sketch written after observing a deformed Louisville Negro, the original "Jim Crow." He improved upon the crooning melody and the dance steps and added original verses, and the show became almost instantaneously a success. By 1843, whole minstrel troupes, such as Charles Christy's "Ethiopian Minstrels," were appearing in Cincinnati in interludes on the program; by 1849 they were beginning to furnish the whole evening's entertainment. In the latter year the "Empire Minstrels" performed for fifty-eight nights,

⁴⁰ *Dictionary of American Biography*, ed. by Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone (New York, 1928-1937), XI, 358-9.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, VII, 198.

⁴² Carl Wittke, *Tambo and Bones: History of the American Minstrel Stage* (Durham, 1930), 20-33.

featuring a dancer, R. H. Sliter, who was reported as approaching nearer to "perpetual motion than any machine ever invented."

In some of the larger cities of the State besides Cincinnati—Cleveland, Columbus, and Dayton—a definite if unreliable support was given to theatrical companies. In Cleveland the first theatrical troupe appearing in the community had been presented in the ballroom of a tavern, the Cleveland House, which served as the main theater of the village until 1830. For a time, a bank building was used, and in 1831 Shakespearian plays were presented in the court-house. Later, the second floor of a wooden store building and the third floor of the brick "Italian Hall" were also utilized. Other theaters, including Apollo Hall (1845), the Water Street Theatre (1848) and Watson's New Hall (1849), the latter seating fifteen hundred persons, were used for brief periods.

One of the first dramatic performances in Columbus was *She Stoops to Conquer* presented in the Old Market House on State Street in April, 1828. About four years later productions were given at Young's Coffee House in a room known as the Eagle Theatre. The first theater building in the capital was a wooden structure on the west side of High Street between Broad and Gay streets (1835). About one half of the interior was devoted to the stage, but a pit, two tiers of boxes, and a saloon at the rear were also included. After varying success this theater closed about 1841. Many of the same actors who played in Cincinnati and Cleveland performed here. In 1847, Neil's Hall came to be utilized as a theater, but a fire there the next year caused the Concert Hall to be used thereafter.

People from the rural areas often looked forward to a trip to one of the large cities to see such a double bill as the tragedy *Brutus: or the Fall of Tarquin* and the accompanying farce.⁴³ Some of the musical companies and elocutionists, however, often journeyed from village to village. One of the most esteemed of the former was "The Hutchinson Family" which was rivaled by "The Carmen Family." The elocutionists often aroused a local interest

⁴³ Venable, *Buckeye Boyhood*, 84.

in amateur theatricals, and this led to the organization of village Thespian societies.⁴⁴ Occasionally, rather unusual attractions were offered, though not always on a theater stage, to those interested in diversion. Thus the Indian chief, Black Hawk, appeared in Cleveland in July, 1833, and during the same month, Chang and Eng, Siamese twin brothers, were exhibited in various cities. A "fire-eater," known as the "American Fire King," aroused much attention as he allegedly swallowed oil heated to 250 degrees, burning sealing wax, molten lead, and hot coals. Even the usual magician's performance was occasionally varied by an exhibition like that of "Signor Blitz's learned canaries."⁴⁵

In general, before 1850, uncertain patronage made theatrical enterprises very doubtful financial ventures in Ohio. Great numbers of persons did not possess the means to attend the theater with any degree of regularity; and many of the prosperous were opposed to the theater on religious or moral grounds. Some people objected to the bad character of many plays and the alleged notorious character of many of the profession. The performances of "Jim Crow" Rice and the dancing of a Madame Celeste caused some protest, and a bedroom scene in a play presented in Cincinnati in 1835 aroused objections in the newspapers. In Columbus, in January, 1836, a municipal ordinance was passed for the regulation of "Stage Players and Public Exhibitions," with licenses costing \$75 per year and revokable in case of performances not conducted in a "decent and orderly manner."

Further criticisms were aimed at other aspects of the theater. Fastidious persons in Columbus objected to the "noisy, rude, and rabblelike boys" who frequented the gallery. In Cincinnati many probably agreed with Mrs. Frances Trollope, an Englishwoman living in the city, who recorded her somewhat prejudiced but not unrealistic impression of the demeanor of an Ohio audience thus: "Men came into the lower tier of boxes without their coats; and

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 130-1.

⁴⁵ Cleveland *Herald*, Jan. 19, June 22, July 13, 1833; Cleveland *Daily True Democrat*, May 6, 1850.

I have seen shirt sleeves tucked up to the shoulder; the spitting was incessant, and the smell of onions and whiskey was enough to make one feel even the Drakes' acting dearly bought by the obligation of enduring its accompaniments. . . . The noises, too, were perpetual, and of the most unpleasant kind; the applause . . . expressed by cries and thumping with the feet, instead of clapping; and when a patriotic fit seized them, and 'Yankee Doodle' was called for, every man seemed to think his reputation as a citizen depended on the noise he made."⁴⁶ Audiences indeed were ill-mannered and around 1830 were apt to crack nuts and throw the shells and apple cores into the pit from the upper boxes.⁴⁷ Many theater-goers liked an intermission to promenade and secure refreshments. The bar at the rear of one Columbus theater contributed materially to the decline of that institution, and in Cincinnati the rowdiness which developed from the use of spirituous liquors caused one manager to restrict purchases to coffee, lemonade, and ice cream. There were other difficulties which faced the theater in Ohio before 1850. While the large German population had no religious scruples against dramatic performances, their real love was for musical organizations of various types. Fire was a danger never wholly absent, and it destroyed a number of theater buildings. When the river rose very high in Cincinnati, as in December, 1846, the "gasometer" would be submerged, and the gas to light the theater would be unavailable. Hence, in this instance, the Viennese dancers, who were described by one Cincinnati belle as seeming "more like fairies than human beings," had to cut short their engagement.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Frances Trollope, *Domestic Manners of the Americans* (London, 1832), I, 187-8.

⁴⁷ C. F. Goss, *Cincinnati, the Queen City* (Chicago, 1912), I, 157, 449.

⁴⁸ Smith, *Life of Giles Richards*, 108.

CHAPTER VI

Religion and Education

MOST Ohio pioneers had journeyed westward primarily to improve their economic position, and in the transition, old religious ties were often cast aside. New communities, moreover, were apt to be the abode of restless individuals who became notorious for rowdyism, drinking, swearing, and gambling.¹ Some settlers, especially those from New England, had reacted unfavorably to the rigors of puritanical restraints and church taxes which prevailed in Massachusetts and Connecticut, and a distrust of organized religion was often the result. In the early days of Cleveland an effigy of Jesus was displayed in a ribald parade, and a mock celebration of the Lord's Supper was carried out.² The seemingly cruel aspects of nature in the raw along the frontier raised doubts in many minds as to a God of Love at the heart of the universe, and the hypocritical lives of various professing Christians turned away many sincere, upright souls from the church. At the same time, no easy-going requirements satisfied local church officers, and a definite personal religious experience with consistently pious conduct thereafter was often insisted upon. Hence, the doubtful, the weak, and many with a fondness for seemingly legitimate pleasure, steered clear of church affiliations.

Thus, the religious views of the Zanesville postmaster in 1825 were analyzed in a fashion to suggest the "village atheist": "[He] is considered by many of us, as one of the most determined enemies to Christianity that lives among us. It is confidently stated by those who have lived here ever since he came, that he has never been at a place of worship. I have it from the most unquestioned authority,

¹ W. W. Sweet, *Religion on the American Frontier* (New York, 1936), II, *The Presbyterians*, 56.

² A. C. Ludlow, *Old Stone Church* (Cleveland, 1920), 32-3.

that he speaks of the Old Testament and the New, with contempt. A gentleman of high respectability, who is not a professor of religion . . . lately informed me that he had heard him speak of the miraculous conception of our Saviour, in a strain of vulgarity and blasphemy, which made him shudder! and that he declared that no person but a fool would believe it. . . ."³

Senator Benjamin Tappan of Steubenville, a son of a devout New England family and in private conduct an exemplary man, early became strongly opposed to the Puritan clergy and adopted liberal views which caused him to be referred to as "the hoary headed skeptic."⁴ Tappan's philosophy is revealed in the comments which he confided to his personal journal concerning Stephen Haight, sergeant-at-arms of the United States Senate: "His religious creed was not large. The priests could not have got much if anything out of him. I knew him only as a good humored man who bore ill health with philosophic calm and met death without fear."⁵

Frances ("Fanny") Wright, a Scotchwoman of liberal views, lectured frequently to Cincinnati audiences, beginning in 1827. Thus, in August, 1828, she delivered an address at the court-house in Cincinnati on "Free Inquiry." One citizen commented that in her "attack upon Christianity" there was nothing new, but that, in "the arrogance of her pride," she tried to create the impression "that the torch of truth was never lighted till she blew her breath upon it."⁶ Opposition naturally was aroused, but she later settled in Cincinnati where she died in 1852.⁷

Under such circumstances there were those in Ohio who were discouraged as to the prospects of religion, one person writing from Butler County in 1828: "Religion revives but little among us here. Indeed I have almost despaired of seeing much done

³ Samuel J. Cox to John McLean, Zanesville, Ohio, March 26, 1825, McLean MSS.

⁴ Joseph Benham to *id.*, Cincinnati, Jan. 20, 1839, *ibid.*

⁵ Entry for Jan. 13, 1841, J. K. Wright MSS. (New York City).

⁶ Cincinnati *Chronicle*, Aug. 30, 1828, letter of "Oliver Oldschool."

⁷ C. T. Greve, *Centennial History of Cincinnati* (Chicago, 1904), I, 583.

here.”⁸ A visitor to Toledo in April, 1837, complained that there was no meeting-house and, on a Sunday morning, no preaching service,⁹ and Congressman Elisha Whittlesey, commenting on the marriage of a young female relative to a clergyman, hoped that she would do well, but stated that a minister’s wife on the Western Reserve could not be in “a very enviable situation.”¹⁰ Yet, by 1825, the major religious denominations of the country had been established in Ohio on a fairly substantial basis. Practically every community had at least one church, and at the time of the organization of the First Presbyterian (Old Stone) Church in Cleveland (1820), fifty-seven men, practically all of those in the village, had signed the subscription list.¹¹

By 1825, the stabilizing effects of organized religion upon both the individual and the community had come to be fairly well recognized, and many who did not openly affiliate, were friendly to church organizations. Thus gruff Duncan McArthur, a hardy pioneer, wrote to his wife that he was pleased to hear of the progress of religion in the Chillicothe vicinity and though he did not know that he personally could join it, he hoped that it was founded on reality and would make many happy both in the present and the hereafter.¹²

To some extent, the wide-spread religious skepticism and indifference, which had alarmed the New England clergy around 1800, had tended to become less prevalent in Ohio, though possibly still more general than in the East. John McLean, postmaster-general and then United States Supreme Court justice, of Lebanon (and later Cincinnati), had early been inclined toward religious skepticism but had become a prominent Methodist layman. In 1828 he wrote to Governor Allen Trimble, who had recently joined the Methodist church, that he had never regretted the

⁸ Hannah Baker to Charles M. Heaton, Monroe, Ohio, June 4, 1828, Heaton MSS.

⁹ Joshua R. Giddings to his wife, Toledo, April 22-23, 1837, Giddings MSS.

¹⁰ Elisha Whittlesey to Giddings, Canfield, Ohio, Oct. 13, 1832, *ibid.*

¹¹ Ludlow, *Old Stone Church*, 35.

¹² Duncan McArthur to his wife, Washington, Feb. 25, 1825, McArthur MSS.

step which he had taken, there being "more solid peace and happiness" in the church than among unbelievers.¹³ Joshua R. Giddings, long a Western Reserve congressman, wrote to his daughter in 1840 that as a young man he had not only been inclined toward skepticism but had positively wished to disbelieve, until a full investigation had caused him to accept the Christian faith. Accordingly, he had sought to train his children in the ways of religion by family devotions and church attendance, and he expected them to be faithful in such observances. He said that he was pained "beyond measure" that a young woman living in their household had influenced his daughters so that they were speaking lightly of religion. He admitted that "much superstition and bigotry" were mixed with Christianity by the ignorant and superstitious but he believed that the enlightened mind should separate them and devote its best efforts to advancing "the cause of virtue and pure religion."¹⁴

In almost every community there were women like Mrs. Duncan McArthur who wrote to her husband that she intended to spend Christmas by attending church, as the most proper way to observe the day.¹⁵ There were likewise men of the type of Charles Cist, a business man of Cincinnati, who inaugurated and supervised the first Sunday-school in that city. Seabury Ford, later governor of the State, wrote solicitously in 1836, regarding his home village: "And now what is the state of things at Burton? What is the state of feeling among those who profess to have entered the service of Him who *died* that *Sinners* might live? . . . Nothing would give me so much pleasure as to learn that the Holy Spirit has been found out there to bring sinners to tremble in view of their situation, and to yield up their hearts to God. . . ."¹⁶

¹³ F. P. Weisenburger, *Life of John McLean* (Columbus, 1937), 7.

¹⁴ J. R. Giddings to Maria Giddings, Mar. 18, 1840, Giddings MSS.; *id.* to *id.*, March 19, 1840, *ibid.*

¹⁵ Nancy McArthur to Duncan McArthur, Fruithill, Ohio, Dec. 24, 1826, McArthur MSS.

¹⁶ Seabury Ford to Peter Hitchcock, Columbus, Feb. 10, 1836, Rice MSS. (in Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society Library, Columbus).

Even in those days, some recognized the extent to which denominational barriers created ill will and jealousy, and in 1840, a traveler in Dayton observed that there were too many churches there to receive adequate support.¹⁷ One man wrote in 1829, that in Middletown economy was the order of the day, except in the building of churches, four (Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Catholic) being planned for that summer.¹⁸ In 1840, it was estimated that in Ohio there were 80,000 Methodists; 40,000 Presbyterians; 30,000 Catholics; 10,000 Baptists; and 1,500 Episcopalians,¹⁹ although such calculations were probably not very reliable.

Among the denominations in pioneer Ohio, the Presbyterians particularly might have seemed to have enjoyed favorable prospects. Large numbers of Scotch-Irish—traditionally devoted to that church—were found among the settlers of southern and eastern Ohio, where Presbyterian churches had been founded, with able and assertive ministers. One of the most influential of these was Joshua Lacy Wilson, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Cincinnati from 1808 to 1846. Over six feet in height, he was said to resemble Andrew Jackson both in physical and mental attributes. Noted for his "great energy and decision of character" he possessed the strength and the weakness of the typical Scotch-Irish Presbyterian. He was tireless in his devotion to the moral and religious welfare of the city, aiding in the establishment of Sunday-schools, Bible societies, and libraries; he was aggressive in his advocacy of education, assisting in the founding of Cincinnati College, serving as professor of moral philosophy and logic there for several years, and acting as the first chairman of the Board of Trustees of Lane Theological Seminary. But many believed that he was far too uncompromising in his moral and religious convictions. He attacked the theater, dancing, and the Masonic lodge; and his unwavering Calvinism involved him in endless controversy

¹⁷ J. S. Buckingham, *Eastern and Western States of America* (London, 1842), II, 419.

¹⁸ James Heaton to C. M. Heaton, Middletown, Jan. 23, 1829, Heaton MSS.

¹⁹ Buckingham, *Eastern and Western States*, II, 313.



14. TOWER OF CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, ATWATER
Erected 1838-41. Courtesy of Frank J. Roos, Jr.

with more liberal persons within and without the Presbyterian Church.²⁰ In his church, during a great revival, thousands would be found in attendance, and until 1829 a gallery was reserved for colored people.

By 1831, there were six churches of this denomination in Cincinnati. Those who preferred a fairly liberal brand of theology might find a pew in the Second Church, "the aristocratic, rich church" of the city, where Senator Jacob Burnet and other prominent citizens worshiped, and where Lyman Beecher preached from Sunday to Sunday. Here, visitors to the city, such as Daniel Webster, who spent a week in Cincinnati in 1837, were apt to attend service,²¹ and an Ohio Supreme Court justice recorded his impressions in 1839:

"Yesterday was an interesting day to me. I attended Dr. Beecher's church. It was the stated communion season and not far from thirty were received into the church. The congregation was large and attentive. In that congregation there is quite an interesting state of things. Conversions are frequent, and the revival from what I could learn is progressing. At the meeting last evening great numbers were present. . . . The doctor is very much engaged and takes great courage. He complains however that his church does not second him in his efforts, although he says that there is a better state of things, than at any previous time since he came to Cincinnati. In his sermon last evening his principal object was to show that it was the duty of the minister to strive for the conversion of all his hearers and this was the reason as he stated why he was so constantly preaching to sinners."²²

Beecher was from New England, and the contrast with Wilson, to some degree reflected the differences between the Presbyterian Church in southern Ohio and in the northern part of the State. New England Congregationalists and Presbyterians from the Mid-

²⁰ *Dictionary of American Biography*, ed. by Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone (New York, 1928-1937), XX, 340.

²¹ Hamilton (Ohio) *Intelligencer*, June 8, 1837.

²² Hitchcock to his wife, Cincinnati, Apr. 8, 1839, Rice MSS.

dle and Southern states had hoped that a duplication of effort might be avoided in the West. Accordingly, steps had been taken toward a Plan of Union which was adopted by 1801. A spirit of accommodation was agreed upon, with an understanding that ministers of the one denomination in the West might serve churches of the other type without the church or minister altering existent connections.²³ In practise, the tenacity of the Presbyterians, and their rigid ministerial organization in contrast with the loose-knit associations of the Congregationalists, caused many Congregational ministers to affiliate with the presbyteries and many churches ultimately to become Presbyterian in government. In this way the Presbyterians increased in numbers in communities largely settled by former Congregationalists, particularly in northern Ohio.

The situation, however, presented difficulties. By 1831, many Presbyterian churches on the Western Reserve were not organized locally according to Presbyterian standards, much to the alarm of rigid constitutionalists in the denomination. Rivalry, moreover, developed between missionary efforts supported jointly under the Plan of Union and those carried on solely by Presbyterians. The rise of Unitarianism in New England had a liberalizing effect upon Congregational theology, and soon the rigid Calvinists among the Presbyterians were concerned over alleged heresy within their own denomination. Rev. Joshua L. Wilson of Cincinnati became a heresy-hunter, bringing charges against Reverend Asa Mahan of the Sixth Church of that city, and later against Lyman Beecher. Much discussion and litigation developed, but neither man was convicted by the ecclesiastical authorities. Another factor, the rise of antislavery feeling, especially in the churches with a New England heritage, caused dissension within the denomination. The liberals formed a faction of New School men, opposing the Old School conservatives, but in 1837 the Old School group triumphed in the denominational General Assembly, and several synods, including that of the Western Reserve in Ohio, were

²³ W. S. Kennedy, *Plan of Union* (Hudson, Ohio, 1856), 195-6.

excscinded. The result was the creation of two distinct national Presbyterian bodies, with some of the members of the denomination in Ohio in each group.²⁴ In the meantime, many Congregational ministers had become restless in their connections with the Presbyterians, and in 1834 the first local Congregational Conference in Ohio was organized. Two years later the Congregational General Association of the Western Reserve was formed. Congregationalists were generally more antislavery in sentiment than the Presbyterians. Hence, in 1835 antislavery members of the Presbyterian Church in Mansfield organized a Congregational Church, and in 1846 the Sixth Presbyterian Church of Cincinnati was transformed into the Vine Street Congregational Church.²⁵

The Methodists of Ohio experienced great difficulties in establishing churches prior to 1825, and in many communities they held services in private homes for ten years or more before they found it possible to erect a religious edifice.²⁶ Among the Scotch-Irish the Presbyterian influence was often so strong that "Methodism could scarcely live." On the Western Reserve, moreover, Wesleyan preachers for many years had a discouraging struggle in competition with the Calvinistic clergy, a large part of whom were graduates of the best New England colleges. The formal demeanor and rigid doctrines of many Calvinists, however, tended to alienate a large majority of Ohioans. Children of the former were often required to spend a large part of the Sabbath in learning the Shorter Catechism, but a richer emotional expression was demanded by the average farmer or village workman.²⁷ Many people of Presbyterian background, therefore, found their way to Methodist meetings, and some, such as a Steubenville uncle of Woodrow Wilson, aroused the wrath of their parents by their espousal of Methodist doctrines. The circuit-riding system, by

²⁴ Sweet, *Religion on the American Frontier*, II, 99-125.

²⁵ D. L. Leonard, ed., *Papers of the Ohio Church Society* (Oberlin, Ohio, 1889-1900), II, 31; VI, 18.

²⁶ John M. Barker, *History of Ohio Methodism* (Cincinnati, 1898), 327, 387.

²⁷ J. G. Peebles, "Recollections," in N. W. Evans, *History of Scioto County* (Portsmouth, Ohio, 1903), 447.

which two preachers (each paid about \$300 a year) could serve thirty preaching stations, simplified the problem of financial support for the Methodists.

Revivals, which were often annual affairs, added great numbers to Methodist rolls. In 1824-1825, over two hundred persons joined the Chillicothe Methodist Church in four months, the pastor reporting that it had "pleased the Lord to favor his Zion in this place in a wonderful and glorious manner."²⁸ In Marietta a revival during the following winter added 125 to the Methodist membership. In Cincinnati the brick church erected in 1822 and commonly known as "Brimstone Corner" soon proved too small, and the larger Wesley Chapel was erected in 1831. Part of the success of the revivals, especially in rural communities, was due to the fact that a lack of public entertainment existed. On occasion, an excess of emotionalism irritated even some of the more fastidious Methodists, for the aggressive efforts of the evangelists often aroused agonizing perplexities among the young, especially when their parents disapproved of what they considered fanatical exhibitionism.²⁹ The revivals, nevertheless, had important, and in some respects, salutary effects upon the religious and cultural life of Ohioans. In a rather vulgar and even brutal society, a strong emotional stimulus was necessary to raise many people above the rough, obscene and vicious influences with which they came in contact. Among those "converted" at the revivals were numbers of people who became able and effective leaders in the church and in society. Thus, Leonidas Lent Hamline, a lawyer by profession, developed into a powerful and persuasive preacher in Cincinnati, and turning his attention to religious journalism, aided in the establishment of the *Ladies' Repository*, long an important western periodical.³⁰ Another prominent religious leader in the West, reared under strong Wesleyan influences, was Mat-

²⁸ John F. Wright to Duncan McArthur, Chillicothe, Feb. 14, 1825, McArthur MSS.

²⁹ W. C. Howells, *Recollections of Life in Ohio from 1813 to 1840* (Cincinnati, 1895), 103.

³⁰ *Dict. of Amer. Biog.*, VIII, 198-9.

thew Simpson of Cadiz. Limited in his formal education, he had a natural aptitude for learning. Admitted to the ministry in 1834, he became the most prominent and influential Methodist of his generation, an orator of almost world-wide repute and a trusted advisor of political leaders.

Although most Germans in Ohio were Lutheran, Catholic, or Reformed in religious background, numbers of them came under the vibrant influence of the Wesleyan preachers. William Nast, a native of Wurttemberg, after varied experiences, determined to enter the Methodist ministry. He was urged to undertake work among the steadily increasing German population of Cincinnati and was appointed a missionary to that people. As a result he not only became the founder of the first German Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, but he carried religious influences to German communities throughout Ohio and neighboring states. One of his most influential followers was Ludwig Sigmund Jacoby, of German-Jewish stock, who had been baptized a Lutheran. Locating in Cincinnati he was ordained to the Methodist ministry, and aided by his wife, who had renounced Catholicism, he entered upon a most successful missionary career. He carried Methodism to his countrymen of the Mississippi Valley and even to Germany and Switzerland.³¹

The Baptists had early established congregations in Ohio and continued as a leading denomination. They also conducted revival meetings, and around 1840, the eloquent George Ellis Pugh, later United States senator, was an exhorter at Baptist meetings in Cincinnati. The Methodists, however, excelled in the art of emotional appeal; and soon the advent of the followers of Alexander Campbell, who were called Campbellites or Disciples, made further inroads upon Baptist prospects.

Like the Baptists, the Presbyterians lost considerable actual or potential numbers to the Disciples,³² one of whose ablest leaders was a Scotchman, Walter Scott, who had been a Presbyterian and

³¹ *Ibid.*, IX, 569-70.

³² Sweet, *Religion on the American Frontier*, II, 418-9.

then a Baptist. Coming in contact with Alexander Campbell, he joined the Campbellite movement in Ohio and became one of the most influential preachers of the time. His special significance was that he molded the pattern of evangelism and developed the art of propaganda for his denomination so as to make possible its large and rapid numerical growth. Alexander Campbell himself preached frequently in Ohio during the 1820's, and Scott was successful in reviving, on a Campbellite basis, numerous defunct Baptist churches in the State. In April, 1829, Campbell created considerable stir in Cincinnati by a public debate, lasting eight days, with the reformer Robert Owen, the former defending the foundations of revealed religion. Early in 1837, a controversy over the use of the Bible in the schools, led to a debate between Campbell and the Roman Catholic bishop, John Baptist Purcell, in Cincinnati as to the merits of Catholicism.³³ The Campbellites demanded quite as strict a regimen of living as many older sects, and such austerity proved unattractive to some. Thus, James Mitchell Ashley, later a nationally known Ohio congressman, as a boy accompanied his father, an itinerant preacher, on circuit; but at sixteen he rebelled and escaped to become a cabin-boy on an Ohio River steamboat.³⁴

The Episcopal Church was relatively weak in Ohio, for its fairly prosperous members in the East were generally not those who chose to migrate to the western wilderness; and its somewhat formal services did not generally attract revival-loving pioneers, who sometimes referred to its communicants as Church of Englanders.³⁵ Struggling congregations, however, existed in a number of towns, and the work of Bishop Philander Chase laid the foundations for later progress.³⁶ One of his successors, Charles Pettit McIlvaine (consecrated as bishop in 1832) was at the time of the Oxford movement, which leaned toward Catholicism, a leader in the

³³ Cincinnati *Gazette*, Jan. 24, 1837.

³⁴ *Dict. of Amer. Biog.*, I, 389-90.

³⁵ Cincinnati *Gazette*, Feb. 7, 1837.

³⁶ J. A. Doyle, *The Church in Eastern Ohio* (Steubenville, 1914), 19-68.

low-church or evangelical camp.³⁷ By 1840, in Cincinnati one of the Episcopal churches was a spacious Gothic structure, and another, with a fine Ionic portico was patterned after a Greek temple.

There had been few Catholics among the early pioneers of Ohio, and as late as 1850 there were many rural neighborhoods in which no Catholics resided. Definitely a minority group, the Catholics of the State were often referred to as "papists" and were commonly distrusted religiously and politically. In 1833 Purcell recorded in his journal that in one parish the Protestant Americans were leaving the neighborhood, apparently "owing to the great influx of Roman Catholics." The first Catholic church in the State had not been erected until 1818 (in Perry County), and soon thereafter a small frame church was erected in Cincinnati. The influx of increasing numbers of immigrants of the Catholic faith, however, soon caused a rapid development of Catholicism in Ohio. Father Edward D. Fenwick became the first bishop of Cincinnati in 1823, and by 1826, a brick cathedral had been built to meet the needs of the larger congregation. The old edifice had resembled "a German village church" with few ornaments except four chandeliers, the gift of the Queen of Etruria, and a gilded tabernacle, presented by Pope Pius VII.³⁸ The new cathedral, however, was one of the show places of the city "with its florid façade, its small towers or turrets, and its lofty central spire, surmounted by the cross."³⁹ In the interior, the altar was tastefully arranged, and was "ornamented by a large and beautiful painting," illustrating a service of religious investiture. Other valuable paintings, the gift of a European patron, had been hung on the walls, and an organ had been placed in the gallery.⁴⁰ In time this edifice likewise proved inadequate as a cathedral, and St. Peter's was erected on a different site (1841-51) at a cost of \$120,000.

³⁷ *Dict. of Amer. Biog.*, XII, 64-5.

³⁸ Karl Bernhard, Duke of Saxe-Weimar, *Travels through North America during the Years 1825 and 1826* (Philadelphia, 1828), II, 137-8.

³⁹ Buckingham, *Eastern and Western States*, II, 391-2.

⁴⁰ Benjamin Drake and E. D. Mansfield, *Cincinnati in 1826* (Cincinnati, 1826), 35-6.

Beginning in 1824, nuns from Europe arrived to assist in educational work, and later in works of charity and nursing. In 1829, the vicar-general at Cincinnati, while visiting in Vienna, secured the sending of missionaries, supported by the Leopoldine Foundation, to the Cincinnati diocese.

Three Redemptorist priests and three lay brothers arrived in 1832. The result of such efforts prompted Lyman Beecher of Lane Theological Seminary (Cincinnati) to publish in 1834 his *Plea for the West* which was to run through several editions, urging the strengthening of Protestant efforts to control the Ohio and Mississippi valleys. Some westerners resented Beecher's apparently recently developed recognition of the significance of the West, and the Englishwoman, Harriet Martineau, referred to him as "the ostentatious and virulent foe of the Catholics," one who had done much to quicken a spirit of "illiberality" in Cincinnati.⁴¹

The leaders of Catholicism, however, moved forward, establishing schools so that the Catholic youth would not be weaned away from the Roman fold, and as Irish immigrants came to work on the canals, Catholic parishes appeared almost immediately. German immigration added materially to the strength of this church, and the colorful ceremony and dogmatic certainty of Catholicism attracted some converts from Protestantism. Thus, an Ohio West Pointer, William Starke Rosecrans, embraced the Catholic faith



15. ST. PETER'S ROMAN
CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL,
CINCINNATI

Erected 1841-51. Courtesy of Frank J. Roos, Jr.

⁴¹ Harriet Martineau, *Retrospect of Western Travel* (London, 1838), II, 251.

while attending the Military Academy. He thereupon influenced his brother, Sylvester Horton Rosecrans, a student at Kenyon College, who in 1845 entered the Catholic Church and later (1868) became the first bishop of Columbus.⁴² In 1843, there were fifty priests in the diocese of Cincinnati which included all of Ohio. Of these, nine were Americans, twelve were Germans, eleven French, ten Irish, four Italians, three Belgians, and one was a Spaniard.⁴³

With the coming of a considerable German migration, various Protestant sects such as the Lutheran, the Evangelical, and the Reformed attained a relatively important place among Ohio religious organizations. Rev. Joseph Zäslein, Jakob Gülich, and Ludwig H. Meyer were the first Protestant German clergy in Cincinnati, but a large portion of the Germans distributed themselves in farming communities where they erected religious edifices, especially those of the Lutheran faith.

Moravians and Mennonites were found in considerable numbers. Among these were Swiss Mennonites, some of whom had lived in Alsace. They settled in Holmes and Wayne counties and, after 1833, some located in Allen and Putnam counties where cheaper lands were available.⁴⁴

Religious societies with liberal creeds were few in number in early Ohio. One of the first was the First Congregational (Unitarian) of Cincinnati, organized in 1824. Among its early pastors were Adam Bancroft (father of George Bancroft, the historian), James Freeman Clarke, Christopher Breese Cranch (poet and painter), and William H. Channing (nephew of William Ellery Channing). Of longer service was James Handasyd Perkins, a cousin of W. H. Channing, and an active leader in the cause of prison reform, feminine education, and poor relief. In 1848 he made an attempt to establish a liberal church in Cincinnati on a

⁴² *Dict. of Amer. Biog.*, XVI, 162.

⁴³ Rev. John H. Lamott, *History of Archdiocese of Cincinnati, 1821-1921* (New York, 1921), 169.

⁴⁴ D. A. Gratz, "Historical and Genealogical Sketch of the Swiss Mennonites of Allen and Putnam Counties," *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, XLIX (1940), 282-8.



16. BIMELER'S HOME AT ZOAR

The residence of the leader of the famous communistic experiment. Courtesy of Ohio State Museum.

basis of applied Christianity; but discouragement overcame him, and he committed suicide by drowning. Universalist churches were fairly numerous, and there were some followers of the Swedenborgian philosophy. Allen G. Thurman's mother was one of the latter, as was the father of William Dean Howells. The Swedenborgian Church in Cincinnati included a substantial number of prominent citizens in its membership.⁴⁵ The Quakers—with their distinctive garb and their reliance upon the "inner light"—had been among the earlier settlers of Ohio. Especially in the eastern and southern portions of the State their meetings continued to be an important part of the religious life of those regions.

Various communistic societies, most of them with a religious basis, had also been established in the State. Thus, Shakers had

⁴⁵ O. D. Smith, *Life and Times of Giles Richards* (Columbus, 1936), *passim*.

established themselves near Lebanon and on the site of the present Shaker Heights, Cleveland. They were a very industrious people, but their belief in the desirability of absolute sex abstinence eventually led to their extinction as a group.⁴⁶ The Zoar Society was composed of German Separatists, pietistic pacifists who had settled in Tuscarawas County (1817). A communistic plan having been adopted in 1819, numerous persons were thereafter admitted to the organization, especially during the years 1830-1834, when one hundred and seventy persons, mostly relatives or friends of the original members, were added.⁴⁷ By 1833, the community possessed sixty attractive buildings with new red-tile roofs, a sight seldom seen in America.

Among the various religious groups in Ohio, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (commonly called the Mormons) probably excited the most interest in proportion to their numbers. Under the leadership of Joseph Smith they moved from New York state to Kirtland, Ohio, early in 1831. Great missionary zeal accompanied their activities, and the small band increased within seven years to perhaps twenty-five thousand. Due to a supposed revelation from heaven, in 1833 the building of a temple was undertaken. Hostility, however, soon developed from various sources, and neighboring newspapers revealed the alleged iniquities of Mormon practise. Some of Smith's advisers, including Sidney Rigdon, became involved in land speculation, and in the wild-cat banking activities of the Kirtland Safety Society Anti-Banking Company, in spite of the refusal of a charter by the Ohio legislature. Finally, in January, 1838, fearing the wrath of the populace and the action of the courts, Smith and his followers abandoned their elaborate plans for a city and fled to Missouri.⁴⁸ Such fragments of the group as remained in Ohio were among those who combined in 1852 to form the non-polygamous Reorgan-

⁴⁶ J. P. McLean, "Society of Shakers," *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, IX (1900/1901), 32ff.

⁴⁷ E. B. Nixon, "Zoar Society: Applicants for Membership," *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, XLV (1936), 341-50.

⁴⁸ Leonard, ed., *Papers of the Ohio Church Society*, I, 43-59.

ized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, an organization independent of the larger body whose activities have centered in Utah. Many of the Mormons who located in the Far West, however, were Ohio-born converts such as Lorenzo Snow, who had been an Oberlin student and who became the fifth president of the Mormon society in Utah.

By 1850 there were 3,939 churches of various connections in Ohio. The more numerous organizations were: Methodist, 1,531 churches, Presbyterian, 663; Baptist, 551; Lutheran, 260; Moravian, 160; Catholic, 130; Congregational, 100; Friends, 94; Christian, 90; Episcopal, 79; German Reformed, 71; and Universalist, 53.⁴⁹

The activities of the churches of Ohio, included a large measure of moral regulation and reform. The Catholic bishop, Purcell, was much chagrined that a priest in Cincinnati had been taking "the young Seminarians to *Whiskey shops* and to the *Theatre*" and that the brother of a priest had been accused of "too much familiarity with a servant maid."⁵⁰ The Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists and Presbyterians were especially zealous in the field of moral restraint, and a visitor to a community where such groups set the standards of society might expect to pass a very quiet Sunday. Such sects expected a godly life of church-members, and ecclesiastical discipline was sometimes visited upon the weak and wayward. Occasionally a Presbyterian would voluntarily appear before the local church officials and profess repentance for such an offense as



17. MORMON TEMPLE, KIRTLAND
Built 1833-36. From Henry Howe,
Historical Collections of Ohio (Cincinnati, 1848), p. 283.

⁴⁹ J. D. B. De Bow, *Statistical View of the U. S.* (Washington, 1854), 133.

⁵⁰ Sister Mary Agnes McCann, ed., "Bishop Purcell's Journal, 1833-1836," *Catholic Historical Review* (Washington), V (1919), 239-56.

fornication, but the rigid spirit of discipline might require a period of suspension until evidence had been given of the sincerity of the contrition. Such instances were relatively rare, but persons known by common report to have attended "balls and dancing parties" or to have become intemperate were apt to be visited by a church elder. Then, if a proper spirit of repentance were not displayed, the names of the offenders might be struck from the church roll.⁵¹ In both Presbyterian and Congregational churches, members were arraigned for such offenses as scandal, Sunday traveling, theft, sexual immorality, profanity, card-playing, running a Sunday boat, using intoxicants, "attending cotillions and dancing parties," and neglecting the "means of grace," including family prayers.⁵² Sometimes the erring members would write a most apologetic declaration of repentance, but on other occasions an accused individual might frankly declare that he felt no sense of sin in attending a ball or in pursuing other worldly pleasures. One lady indeed announced her intention thereafter to attend the Episcopal Church which she felt would offer a more congenial and less puritanical atmosphere.⁵³ In a community such as Oberlin, the use of tobacco was frowned upon as inconsistent with Christian principles, and objections were raised even to the use of tea and coffee as "strong and unnecessary drinks." In 1837 a member of the Oberlin Church was brought to trial for the drinking of tea, although apparently there were always those in the community who indulged in its use.⁵⁴ In the Presbyterian Church at Granville, the Reverend Jacob Little sought moral improvement for his flock by a rather unusual procedure. For sometime before New-year's he would gather statistics as to the number of persons who indulged in habitual profanity, in Sabbath-breaking, in drinking to excess; the number who did not attend church and Sunday-school; and the number culpa-

⁵¹ Sweet, *Religion on the American Frontier*, II, 419, 423-4.

⁵² Leonard, ed., *Papers of the Ohio Church Society*, VI, 8.

⁵³ Defiance, Ohio, First Presbyterian Church, MS. records; [H. D. Phelps], *Centenary History of the First Presbyterian Church of Defiance* (Defiance, 1937), 9.

⁵⁴ R. S. Fletcher, "Government of Oberlin Colony," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* (Cedar Rapids, Iowa), XX (1933), 179ff.

ble for other reasons. Then he would use some feature of these facts as a basis for his New-year's sermon which invariably attracted such crowds that every seat would be occupied and extra accommodations sometimes had to be provided in the aisles. For this service, the hymn, "While with ceaseless course the sun," was selected.⁵⁵

Temperance was a subject for much concern, especially on the part of the evangelical denominations. Congregationalists were probably the most zealous in the movement. Thus, in 1833, the church at Wellington passed a resolution requiring new members to promise entire abstinence in the use and sale of alcohol, a rule which produced considerable trouble. In 1849, the General Conference of the United Brethren Church, meeting in Germantown, Ohio, forbade the use of intoxicants by its members for beverage purposes. At times, a Catholic pastor, like Father Joshua M. Young of Lancaster, might advocate the Father Mathew (teetotal pledge) among his parishioners,⁵⁶ but generally Catholic and Episcopal churches did not participate actively in the movement. One prominent Ohio politician reported in 1842:

"Temperance is going ahead rough shod over all opposition but [that] from the Episcopal church and even in this sage and wondrous wise and shrewd excitement-hating body some light is breaking in."⁵⁷ Apparently at times church-members were quite indifferent to the movement. Thus, at one temperance gathering in 1844 in southwestern Ohio, Samuel Fenton Cary, the speaker, who was an officer of the National Division of the Sons of Temperance (and later a prominent Greenback leader) called on someone to open the meeting with prayer, but no one volunteered, to his profound disgust.⁵⁸ Some Presbyterian congregations refused to permit their churches to be used for meetings of such a nature, one declaring in 1845, that while temperance was an aim of the Christian religion, yet it was "inconsistent with the sacred uses of the Sanctuary

⁵⁵ Henry Bushnell, *History of Granville* (Columbus, 1889), 135.

⁵⁶ Kenneth W. Povenmire, "Temperance Movement in Ohio, 1840 to 1860," M. A. thesis, Ohio State University, 1933.

⁵⁷ Edward Wade to J. R. Giddings, Cleveland, January 26, 1842, Giddings MSS.

⁵⁸ Smith, *Giles Richards*, 36.

to tolerate any of those varied measures which excite associations inimical to religious worship.”⁵⁹ Sometimes rather sensational methods were used to create interest in the temperance cause. Thus, in 1841, a group of “reformed drunkards” gave lectures in Ohio cities, and after five lectures in Columbus, eight hundred and sixteen residents signed the teetotal pledge.⁶⁰ In July, 1850, when John B. Gough, the most famous of the reformed drunkards, spoke in Cleveland, he was received by a great crowd of men, women, and children.

Antislavery agitation of course commanded much attention in the churches. The Society of Friends included many ardent abolitionists; and the same leaders who were interested in Sabbath observance, missionary endeavors, and other reforms, worked through Congregational and Presbyterian churches in the interests of the abolitionist movement and found in Ohio a fruitful soil. There were of course Presbyterian ministers who frankly defended the institution of slavery, but even in southern Ohio numerous clergymen of that faith who had been reared in the South were ardently antislavery in their views. On the other hand, Ohio Methodists were generally opposed to abolitionist propaganda, and in 1835 the Ohio General Conference of that church unanimously and vehemently denounced such agitation.⁶¹

The period was also characterized in Protestant circles by a definite interest in missionary activities, and Ohioans felt the challenge of this type of religious work. Thus, William McClure Thomson, a graduate of Miami and a Presbyterian minister, sailed with his wife in 1832 for an influential career in Syria, and William Ashmore, one time pastor of the Baptist Church at Hamilton, departed with his wife in 1850 for long service in the China mission.

Beginning with the Ordinance of 1785, various provisions had been made for assistance to schools in Ohio from the proceeds of

⁵⁹ Sweet, *Religion on the American Frontier*, II, 438.

⁶⁰ Hitchcock to his son, Zanesville, Nov. 4, 1841, Rice MSS.

⁶¹ G. H. Barnes, *Anti-slavery Impulse, 1830-1844* (New York, 1933), *passim*; G. H. Barnes and D. L. Dumond, *Letters of Theodore D. Weld, Angelina Grimké Weld, and Sarah Grimké, 1822-1844* (New York, 1934), I, 284 note.

land grants. For a generation after the first settlement in Marietta, however, no legislation provided taxes for the support of education, and during that period, schooling was wholly at the discretion of the parents who subscribed the necessary funds for maintenance. In the case of an especially well-to-do family a private tutor was often secured. Thus, in 1824, Duncan McArthur wrote to his wife to secure such a person for their little girls. He thought that a schoolmistress rather than a master might be satisfactory, but "a woman of education and correct habits" could not easily be procured in southern Ohio.⁶² In most instances, however, the employment of a teacher was a neighborhood project.

In 1821, the first general Ohio school law was passed by the legislature. This authorized, but did not require, the division of townships into school districts and sanctioned local taxation for the building of a school, the collection of school rates, and free tuition for children whose parents were unable to pay their share of the assessments. In practise, this meant that poor but proud parents kept their children at home. A great advance was registered by the law of February 6, 1825, which no longer made the tax optional with a locality but required the county commissioners to assess a half mill on all taxable property for school purposes. The creation of districts and school organizations continued to be a local responsibility, although provision was made for the withholding of school revenues from townships which failed to perform such duties. During the next twenty-five years, frequent changes were made by the legislature in the tax provisions for school purposes. One writer indeed has said that apparently common school education was a "fascinating subject" to members of the legislature, for almost every year they engaged in "revising, amending, or repealing" previous school laws or in drafting wholly new provisions.⁶³

In Columbus, the first meeting of the board of school directors was held in November, 1826, and a school was opened shortly

⁶² Duncan McArthur to his wife, Washington, Apr. 18, 1824, McArthur MSS.

⁶³ W. C. Cochran, "Western Reserve and the Fugitive Slave Law," *Western Reserve Historical Society, Publications* (Cleveland, Ohio), no. 101 (1920), 61.

thereafter, but funds permitted only a three-month term for several years. In Cincinnati, there had been considerable opposition to tax-supported education on the part of the larger taxpayers, the proprietors of private schools, and the parents of poor children. But Nathan Guilford was a persistent advocate of the system, and secured the passage of legislation in February, 1829, for the erection of free public schools in Cincinnati. The first meetings of the board of trustees, later called the board of education, were held in his home. In 1850 a special act of the legislature authorized the popular election of a Cincinnati superintendent of schools, and Guilford was chosen at an annual salary of \$500. In some places the old private schools prevailed for a long time. In Portsmouth no public schools were organized until 1839, and the same situation existed almost as long in Dayton.⁶⁴ By 1850 there were 11,661 public schools with 12,886 teachers and 484,153 pupils, and 206 academies and private schools with 474 teachers and 15,052 pupils.

The interest of transplanted New Englanders like Guilford, Caleb Atwater, Ephraim Cutler, and Samuel Lewis, in the inauguration and development of a public school system was so marked and met with such constructive results, that New Englanders have sometimes been given almost entire credit for Ohio's early educational development. Their contribution was highly significant, but the unspectacular endeavors of many high-minded leaders from Virginia and the Middle States, especially those of Scotch-Irish descent like Allen Trimble and Samuel Galloway, must not be overlooked.⁶⁵

The early schools were generally of logs. A clapboard door, with strap-hinges and a wooden latch, was the common type of entrance. Windows were few in number, with light admitted through oiled paper. The floor was apt to be made of puncheons, uneven and at times decayed, while the rude benches were made of split logs. Heat was furnished by a huge fireplace which consumed logs six

⁶⁴ Evans, *History of Scioto County*, 484-5.

⁶⁵ William McAlpine, "Origin of Public Education in Ohio," *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, XXXVIII (1929), 409-47.

or seven feet long. During the later years before 1850, the building was often of frame or brick, with window-glass instead of oiled paper, painted sloping desks instead of benches, and an immense tin-plate stove instead of a fireplace. By 1850 each pupil generally had a slate with pencils, a speller, an arithmetic, and a reader. For writing, a copy book, a goose-quill pen and a bottle of ink were necessary. Ink was purchased at the village store or manufactured at home by mixing nutgalls or oakbark ooze and copperas with a weak gum solution. The copy book was composed of several sheets of foolscap, cut and stitched together between a cover of ordinary brown paper. To blot the paper, a sifter of blotting sand was employed. Steel pens gradually took the place of goose-quills, though at first a good one cost a quarter. Lindley Murray's *English Readers* and readers written by Charles W. Sanders were popular for a time but gave way to a set by Lyman Cobb, which was in turn superseded by the *Eclectic Series* of William Holmes McGuffey.⁶⁶ This well-known school text-book author was long a professor at Miami University and at Cincinnati, and from 1839 to 1843 President of Ohio University at Athens. Thereafter, he taught at Woodward College, Cincinnati, until he accepted a professorship at the University of Virginia in 1845. McGuffey also was the author of a widely used *Eclectic Speller*, which competed with one by Dilworth. Nicholas Pike's *Arithmetic* was a favorite in the schools, but the series of arithmetics produced by Joseph Ray, a teacher at Woodward High School (called Woodward College for a time), Cincinnati, for over twenty years after 1831, revolutionized popular education in the field and brought permanent fame to the author.⁶⁷

Reading, writing, and arithmetic were the standard subjects taught in every school. Teachers were expected to have qualified to give instruction in those branches, but after 1838, the teacher's certificate was supposed to state what other subjects the holder was able to teach. A law of 1834 mentioned "the three R's" and "other

⁶⁶ W. H. Venable, *A Buckeye Boyhood* (Cincinnati, 1911), 101ff.

⁶⁷ Jerry Dennis, "Joseph Ray," *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, XLVI (1937), 42-50.



18. WILLIAM HOLMES MCGUFFEY (1800-1873)

Well-known educator and author of text-books. Courtesy of Ohio State Museum.

necessary branches" as the proper curriculum. Grammar often was not taught in the public schools but by traveling lecturers who went from town to town, generally holding classes for adults.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ W. C. Howells, *Recollections of Life in Ohio* (Cincinnati, 1895), 142-3.

Some schools, however, soon began to offer this subject, especially after 1838, when subjects besides "the three R's" were definitely authorized, at the discretion of the local school directors. A law of 1849 provided that, on the application of three householders in a district, English and geography were to be introduced. For English instruction, Samuel Kirkham's *Familiar Lectures on English Grammar* was often used. Jesse Olney's *Geography* was frequently employed but encountered competition from the volume written by Ormsby M. Mitchell, the Cincinnati astronomer. On occasion, an especially alert teacher might even offer a course in civil government, perhaps employing Edward Deering Mansfield's *Political Grammar*.

A large portion of the early teachers were men, and it has frequently been asserted that those employed throughout southern Ohio were generally persons who could not succeed in other vocations. It is true that some of the teachers of that day were overly fond of whiskey, and occasionally one might be discovered to be engaged in horse-stealing as an avocation that eventually led to the penitentiary; but in all parts of Ohio there were many alert and capable schoolmasters, a goodly number of whom were later to attain prominence in law, medicine, or business. Rutherford B. Hayes remembered throughout his life his Yankee schoolmaster, Daniel Granger, who taught the school at Delaware. "Thin, wiry, energetic," Granger had "piercing black eyes" which enabled him, when excited, to seem like "a demon of ferocity." He would flog boys who weighed twice as much as he did and would talk of causing them to "dance about like a parched pea" or of throwing them straight through the walls of the school. On one occasion he carefully aimed a jack-knife so as barely to miss the head of a whispering youngster.⁶⁹ Such on occasion were the methods of the strict disciplinarian during the 1830's!

One of the first organizations for the promotion of education in Ohio was the College of Professional Teachers, organized at Cincinnati in 1831. Under the leadership of Albert Pickett, who

⁶⁹ C. R. Williams, *Life of Rutherford B. Hayes* (Boston, 1914), I, 16.

had been a pupil of Noah Webster, and others of like caliber, it worked in season and out to further the cause of the public schools, sometimes stimulating interest by parades of school children. In 1836, Calvin E. Stowe, professor in Lane Theological Seminary at Cincinnati, was requested by the Ohio legislature to prepare a report on European educational systems for the guidance of that body. Although no assurance was given of compensation, he journeyed to England and the continent. He was asked to pay special attention to the Prussian system, and his *Report on Elementary Instruction in Europe* (1837) was much influenced by Prussian standards. This publication was sent to every school district in the State and was reprinted by the authorities of Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Michigan, and other states. It had a permanent effect upon educational practices in Ohio and in the Nation. Stowe later received \$500 from the State for his services.⁷⁰

All advocates of popular education in Ohio rejoiced in 1837 when Samuel Lewis, a practically self-educated native of Massachusetts, who had long resided in Cincinnati, became Ohio's first superintendent of common schools. Lewis brought great enthusiasm to his work, in the first year traveling twelve hundred miles or more, largely on horseback, and visiting over three hundred schools. He urged various reforms, including school libraries, a state school fund of \$200,000, evening schools in towns and cities, and authority for districts to borrow money for the erection of schoolhouses. A major portion of his recommendations was enacted into law by the legislature in April, 1838, but the program proved to be far ahead of public opinion. Petitions for its repeal and for the abolition of the State superintendency were soon presented, and although Lewis fought vigorously for the retention of his progressive measures, his health became impaired, and he resigned in 1839.

The law of 1838 had included provisions for each county audi-

⁷⁰ C. G. Miller, "Background of Calvin E. Stowe's Report on Elementary Education in Europe," *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, XLIX, 185-90.

tor to serve as school superintendent in his county and for each township clerk to act as superintendent in his township. The effectiveness of the system depended upon the State superintendent at the head, but the office held by that executive was abolished in 1840, the clerical functions being transferred to the secretary of state.⁷¹ The latter was primarily interested in other than educational matters, but Samuel Galloway who served from 1844 to 1850 had a veritable passion for education and did not neglect this phase of his duties. He carefully garnered statistics and published them in his annual reports, declaring that school facilities in Ohio were lamentably inadequate both in physical equipment and in the caliber of the instruction. He found, for example, that some certified teachers could not spell simple words like *ocean* and *earthly* and were ignorant of the multiplication table and the weight of a ton.⁷² Another leader who assisted in various ways in the furtherance of education in Ohio was Asa Dearborn Lord who served from 1839 to 1847 as head of the Western Reserve Teachers' Seminary at Kirtland. Much influenced by the visits of Henry Barnard to Ohio in 1843 and 1846, he participated in what has been generally designated as the first teachers' institute in Ohio (1845), although he had arranged for a similar organization at Kirtland in 1843. He undertook the publication of the *Ohio School Journal* in 1846 and the next year assisted in the organization of the Ohio State Teachers' Association. Appointed to one of the first city school superintendencies in the United States, in Columbus (1847), he there established one of the earliest public high schools in the State.

Practically a generation had passed in Ohio before steps were taken to provide schools for the villages and towns that were in any way superior to the ordinary district schools. In many cases educational opportunities in the towns were actually inferior to those in the rural areas. Marietta in 1825 had obtained legislative authority to vote money in the town meeting for school pur-

⁷¹ E. A. Miller, "History of Educational Legislation in Ohio," *ibid.*, XXVII, 35.

⁷² Washington Gladden, "Samuel Galloway," *ibid.*, IV (1895), 263-78.

poses, and in 1829 Cincinnati was provided with a tax-supported, organized system of free public schools. With the growth of other cities, special charters were granted for the local control of their schools. In 1838, cities, towns, and boroughs without these charters were designated as special school districts, in which the school authorities were empowered to establish schools of various grades. In 1847, the Akron law was formulated for that city, providing for an elective board of education to establish six or more primary schools and one central grammar school. Plans for the classification of students and the holding of public examinations for promotion were also authorized. This legislation resulted in the passage (1849) of a general law embodying similar provisions for cities and towns, and for villages of at least two hundred inhabitants. The next year this system was made applicable to townships and special districts having at least five hundred inhabitants. In both urban and rural areas, a majority vote of the people in the territory affected was necessary to carry the program into operation.

In 1829, a three months' term was the minimum academic year for tax-supported schools, and until 1850 one of six months was the ideal which district schools endeavored to reach. By the laws of 1849 and 1850, schools were to be operated for not less than thirty-six nor for more than forty-four weeks annually.⁷³ A law of 1838 permitted instruction in other than the English language, except in the teaching of "the three R's." But by a law of 1839, each school district could decide the language to be used, and in 1840 German-language schools were established in Cincinnati.

Special schools were established for those who in one way or another deviated from the normal. Thus, in 1827 the Trustees of the Ohio Asylum for Educating the Deaf and Dumb were incorporated. In 1829 Columbus was selected as the permanent location of the institution, and the legislature furnished rather limited financial support until 1846, when regular appropri-

⁷³ Miller, "History of Educational Legislation," 60-8, 56.

ations began to be made. Similarly, State education of the blind began in Columbus in 1837.

Until 1848, Negroes and mulattoes were outside the scope of the Ohio public school system, and their property was exempt from taxes raised for that purpose. In a city such as Columbus with a large colored population, the Negroes themselves attempted to maintain a school. In Cincinnati, where thirty per cent. or more of the Ohio Negroes lived, small negro schools were supported by philanthropic white citizens. In some places violent race prejudice prevented the Negroes from establishing schools even at their own expense, for many whites believed that education would merely render them restless and inclined to violence. On the other hand, in Cleveland and Toledo for a time at least, some Negroes attended the regular schools. In 1848, legislation provided that the colored population be taxed to support separate schools, in communities where there were twenty or more negro children of school age. Elsewhere negro children were to be admitted to the regular schools. The Census of 1850 reported that among the almost two million Ohioans, only 66,020 over twenty years of age could not read or write. Of these 4,990 were Negroes.

Until 1850, the school system of the State was engaged in teaching elementary school subjects, with secondary education limited to such communities as desired it and were willing to pay for it. At that time some few city charters sanctioned the creation of other than elementary schools, but the typical secondary school was the privately-supported "academy," less commonly called an "institute" or "seminary." Generally supported by a stock company organized for building and equipping the school, it was usually provided with running expenses by tuition charges. The first use of the term "high school" in Ohio was for an institution of this type, the Elyria High School, chartered in 1830. Many academies had been established before 1825, and during the next quarter of a century the incorporation of such an institution became almost the distinguishing mark of an en-

terprising community. The multiplicity of religious sects in Ohio practically necessitated that most academies should be free from denominational control.

Many girls were educated, according to the standards of the times, at "Female Seminaries" where such courses as French, music, drawing, penmanship, and needlework were commonly emphasized. One of the best known was that founded at Steubenville in 1829 by Reverend Charles C. Beatty and his wife. In this Steubenville Female Seminary, however, many subjects similar to those offered in academies for boys were stressed. The upper school (for those entering over the age of ten) was organized into middle, junior, and senior classes, the latter two studying such subjects as botany, chemistry, astronomy, algebra, intellectual and moral philosophy, and the evidences of Christianity. To this seminary went such young ladies as the daughter of John J. Crittenden of Kentucky; Jane Woodrow of Chillicothe—destined to become the mother of Woodrow Wilson; and the granddaughter of William Henry Harrison. Cincinnati had a number of boarding schools of similar type, one of which was conducted for a time by Mrs. Caroline Lee Hentz, the novelist, and another by Catharine and Harriet Beecher, daughters of Lyman Beecher.⁷⁴ In September, 1824, a Sister of Mercy from France arrived in Cincinnati and later established the first convent school for girls in Ohio. Other religious schools followed, including the one founded by the Dominican Sisters at Somerset in 1830 and that established fifteen years later by the Ursulines at Saint Martin, Brown County.⁷⁵

The dividing line between secondary and collegiate education was at times practically non-existent, but in 1830 a demand arose at Oxford, Ohio, for a school for girls comparable in standards to Miami University, then a men's school. From this agitation developed the Oxford College for Women, which until its

⁷⁴ Jane Sherzer, "Higher Education of Women in the Ohio Valley Previous to 1840," *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, XXV (1916), 1-17.

⁷⁵ Sister Monica, *The Cross in the Wilderness* (New York, 1930), *passim*.

union with Western College, was the oldest Protestant school for women in the United States that granted the baccalaureate degree. Willoughby Female Seminary, founded in 1847, later developed into Lake Erie College for Women at Painesville (1859).

Both Ohio University at Athens and Miami University at Oxford had profited by land grants for colleges under the terms of the original purchases made by the Ohio Company and by John Cleves Symmes and his associates. Ohio University opened in 1809 but functioned in a limited way until 1822, when, with the organization of a complete faculty, more definite collegiate status was attained. About that time one Cincinnati paper complained that although Ohio had over 600,000 inhabitants, it was "without any public institution worthy of the name of a college, or any public establishment for the education and instruction of the rising generation."⁷⁶ Miami University was organized in 1809 but did not offer instruction until 1824. The first president, a wise and liberal Scotchman, Robert Hamilton Bishop, surrounded himself with an able faculty and endeavored to make the institution the "Yale of the West." In 1839, with 250 students, it was the largest institution of higher learning west of Pennsylvania. Nominally a State school, it was actually controlled by Presbyterians and received a large part of its student body from families of that denomination. Progressive in the encouragement of individual initiative among the students and personally opposed to slavery and to a narrow religious orthodoxy, Bishop at length aroused the ire of reactionary forces. In 1841 he was replaced by the religious conservative of proslavery views, George Junkin, but only after having trained scores of young men from many of the finest home atmospheres in the Ohio Valley in the ways of a genuinely liberal education.⁷⁷ Kenyon College at Gambier was founded by Bishop Philander Chase with the aid of funds raised in England. It was incorporated by the Ohio legislature in 1824 as a "Theological Seminary" but

⁷⁶ Cincinnati *National Republican*, July 18, 1823.

⁷⁷ J. H. Rodabaugh, *Robert Hamilton Bishop* (Columbus, 1935), *passim*.

two years later authority was granted for the broadening of its functions so as to include collegiate instruction. In 1828, it appealed to Congress for a land grant, the Ohio legislature supporting the plea. After a time, however, the faculty and clergy complained of Chase's arbitrary rule, and in 1831, he resigned, to be succeeded by another able but imperious executive, Bishop C. P. McIlvaine. During the next twenty years Kenyon had many students who later attained distinction, including Rutherford B. Hayes, who was graduated as valedictorian in 1842. For a time, a considerable portion of the student body, as at Miami, came from the South. One literary society, the Philomathesian, was made up almost entirely of men from the North, while members of Nu Pi Kappa were almost wholly from the South. By 1841, however, so few southern students were in attendance that the two societies were reorganized on a non-sectional basis.⁷⁸ Cincinnati College was chartered in 1809, but as late as 1826 its activities were temporarily suspended in order to use the income from endowment to pay past debts. In 1835, it resumed operations, but a few years later again suspended instruction except in its law department. After some earlier experiences, St. Xavier's College was chartered in 1842 as a Jesuit institution in the same community.

An educational outpost on the Western Reserve was the college of that name, organized at Hudson in 1826 (and later removed to Cleveland). It was Presbyterian in atmosphere, although free from ecclesiastical control, and its faculty endeavored to guide it in the Yale pattern even in architectural matters. Another institution in the same general region, but less conventional in outlook, was Oberlin College. In 1832 Philo Penfield Stewart and John Jay Shipherd, enthusiastic reformers of deep religious convictions, laid plans for a school and community which would enable serious students to work while in college to meet necessary expenses. As a consequence, the Oberlin community was founded in a forest tract nine miles from Elyria

⁷⁸ Williams, *Life of Hayes*, II, 25-6.



19. BEXLEY HALL, GAMBIER

The building for the Theological Department of the Theological Seminary of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Ohio; erected about 1839. Courtesy of Frank J. Roos, Jr.

(1833) and the Oberlin Collegiate Institute was organized. A factional dispute at Lane Theological Seminary (Presbyterian) in Cincinnati led to important results for Oberlin. In 1834 the holding of a series of antislavery debates at the seminary prompted an order restricting the holding of meetings. In protest, fifty-one students left the school. Invited to establish a theological seminary at Oberlin, thirty former Lane students enrolled there after receiving assurance that Negroes would also be admitted. Under the influence of Asa Mahan (the first president), Charles G. Finney, and Theodore Weld, Oberlin then became a western citadel of the antislavery movement. It maintained a strong puritanical fervor. Any student who traveled on Sunday was excluded from the college. For a period Graham vegetarianism was adopted by faculty and students, and meat

was rigorously excluded from the collegian's diet. Here also the peace movement was espoused as it was nowhere else in the West, and the college early became an innovator in the realm of coeducation. In 1834, young women were admitted to a special "Ladies' Course," and in 1837, four of them were allowed to enroll for the regular four-year curriculum.⁷⁹ Thus, Oberlin became the first coeducational and coracial college in the country, and here was graduated (1847), the ardent feminist, Lucy Stone, who was also an eager antislavery enthusiast. The fame of the school extended even to Europe, and David Livingstone's brother, Charles, hearing of it as a place where a poor boy could obtain an education, traveled from Scotland to become a student in the preparatory, collegiate, and theological departments from 1840 to 1848.⁸⁰

During the 1830's charters were granted for the colleges which later became known as Marietta College (at Marietta); Denison University (at Granville); and Muskingum College (at New Concord). Ohio Wesleyan University at Delaware developed from an offer of people in that town to turn over a large building and \$10,000 to the Ohio Methodists for an educational institution. Chartered in 1842, it opened first as a preparatory school, but in 1844 the college department was organized, the first president being Edward Thomson.⁸¹ During the same decade Baldwin Institute, later Baldwin-Wallace College, at Berea was founded; and Ezra Keller, head of Wittenberg College, Springfield, undertook the erection of the first building of that Lutheran institution. In 1850 others of the Lutheran faith secured a charter for Capital University at Columbus, and at about the same time Otterbein College at Westerville (1849), Urbana University, Heidelberg College (Tiffin) and the institution which became Hiram College got under way. Colleges which were later discontinued, Franklin

⁷⁹ Robert S. Fletcher, "Oberlin and Co-education," *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, XLVII (1938), 1ff.

⁸⁰ R. S. Fletcher, ed., "Going West to College in the Thirties," *Oberlin College Library Bulletin* (Oberlin, O.), II (1930), no. 1, p. 8.

⁸¹ W. W. Sweet, *Methodism in American History* (New York, 1933), 222-3.



20. OBERLIN COLLEGE

Tappan Hall (1833), as it appeared about 1860. Courtesy of Ohio State Museum. at New Athens and Farmers' at College Hill, were then of some importance.

Nevertheless, many young Ohioans were pursuing higher education in the East. In 1824 Allen Trimble declared in the Ohio Senate that a moderate estimate indicated that 70 to 100 such youths were spending \$30,000 outside the State annually. He urged aid for Ohio institutions, for he thought eastern schools might inculcate "polished manners and elegant refinements," but western sons sent to them were apt "to contract habits of vice and dissipation, and to return home effeminate and incapable of making good citizens."⁸² Congressman Duncan McArthur at that very time was complaining that his son Allen at Dickinson College, was so ex-

⁸² *Columbus Gazette*, Jan. 22, 1824.

travagant as to be indeed a very "dear" son.⁸³ Some scions of prominent families, however, continued to attend institutions in the East. Thus, Samuel Sullivan Cox, son of the editor of the Zanesville *Muskingum Messenger*, after two years at Miami University, attended Brown University, from which he was graduated with high honors. George Hunt Pendleton, son of a Cincinnati congressman, even spent some time at Heidelberg University in Germany, and John Strong Newberry, the son of a prosperous coal operator of northeastern Ohio, after graduating from Western Reserve College and from medical school, went to Paris in 1849 to study medicine and to attend geological lectures. Ohio of course sent its quota of cadets to West Point, among them Irvin McDowell, Ulysses S. Grant, William T. Sherman, Hugh Boyle Ewing (who did not graduate), and James B. McPherson and Philip T. Sheridan who matriculated in 1849.

During this period few courses of a strictly professional nature were offered in Ohio. In 1849 Cincinnati prided itself in having the only commercial college in the United States where young men prepared themselves wholly in those subjects particularly useful "in the management of a wide commerce, the counting-house, and the bank or other monied institutions." Known as Gundry's Cincinnati Mercantile College, the proprietor being a member of the Cincinnati bar, it offered courses in business law, bookkeeping, and kindred subjects.⁸⁴ The first medical college in the State had been incorporated as the Medical College of Ohio at Cincinnati (1819). It was reorganized in 1825, the legislature for a time setting aside certain auction fees, collected in Hamilton County, for its use. In 1826 it had four professors and eighty-two students. The well-known Daniel Drake had founded this institution and was from time to time associated with it, but bickerings among the faculty seem to have prevented him from maintaining any long connection with it.⁸⁵ By the end of 1835 the Medical College of

⁸³ Duncan McArthur to Effie McArthur, Feb. 25, 1824, McArthur MSS.

⁸⁴ *Merchants' Magazine* (New York), XX (1849), 569.

⁸⁵ Otto Juettner, *Daniel Drake and His Followers* (Cincinnati, 1909), *passim*.

Ohio had graduated 239 persons. In 1835 Drake established the Cincinnati Medical College, where for a number of years Samuel David Gross was professor of pathological anatomy. In 1839, Gross published his monumental work, *Elements of Pathological Anatomy*, the first effort in the English language to present the subject in systematic form. Jared Potter Kirtland was a founder of Cleveland Medical College (of Western Reserve University) which opened its doors in 1843. Two years later, the Cincinnati Eclectic Medical Institute (which functioned until 1929) was incorporated. Before 1850, a number of other medical institutions, some of them of very short duration, had been incorporated in the State. Worthington Medical School, which followed the views of the Botanics or Thomsonians (vegetarians), functioned for a number of years after 1830, and Willoughby Medical School was in operation from 1834 to 1847.⁸⁶ The Census of 1850 indicated that Ohio then had four medical schools with 518 students. Such instruction as was given in dentistry was closely related to the field of medicine, and physicians commonly performed such dental work as was necessary. A pioneer instructor in dental surgery was Dr. John Harris of Bainbridge, and dentistry gradually emerged as a separate profession.⁸⁷ One of Harris's pupils was John Allen who was active in the founding of the Ohio College of Dental Surgery at Cincinnati in 1845.

Most of the legal education attained in Ohio was through study in an attorney's office, though Cincinnati College had a law department, which with twenty-three students in 1850, was the only one in the State. This was an outgrowth of a private law school organized by John C. Wright and Timothy Walker, a native of Massachusetts, at Cincinnati in 1833. As a teacher at Cincinnati College, Walker wrote a pioneer legal text-book, *Introduction to American Law* (1837) which went through eleven editions, the last published in 1905. Walker had attended Harvard Law School

⁸⁶ F. C. Waite, "Professional Education of Pioneer Ohio Physicians," *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, XLVIII (1939), 189ff.

⁸⁷ E. C. Mills, "Beginning of Formal Dental Education at Bainbridge, Ohio," *ibid.*, 243ff.

for one year, and occasionally an especially favored young man like Rutherford B. Hayes might go from Ohio to pursue a course at that institution.

Theological courses were not always clearly distinct from more general courses offered in denominational colleges, but the Census of 1850 listed seven theological seminaries with eighteen professors and 105 students.

Besides the church and school, other significant educational agencies were the library and the lyceum. Prior to 1817, when Ohio's first general legislation relating to the organization of libraries was passed, special laws had incorporated twenty libraries. Considerable stimulation was given to the organization of libraries after 1826, when the American Lyceum movement was founded. The local lyceums of this period engaged in courses of reading followed by general discussion. They aimed at self-improvement, the development of schools, and the establishment and support of library facilities. Between 1834 and 1839 a number of organizations like the Akron Lyceum and Library Society (1834) were founded. In 1836, an important addition to library facilities in Cincinnati was the Young Men's Mercantile Library.⁸⁸ By 1838, according to Caleb Atwater, most Ohio towns had reading rooms where a traveler could read the principal newspapers and periodicals.⁸⁹ Seemingly, there was less demand for new local libraries during the 1840's, perhaps in part because the lyceum movement was declining, and from 1841 to 1850, only twenty new libraries were incorporated by the State legislature. By 1850 there were sixty-five public libraries in Ohio with a total of 65,703 volumes. The census returns listed, in addition, thirteen libraries connected with schools, two hundred forty-eight with Sunday-schools, twenty-two with colleges, and four with churches.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ D. V. Martin, "History of the Library Movement in Ohio to 1850," M. A. thesis, Ohio State University, 1935, 7, 26-9, 65.

⁸⁹ Caleb Atwater, *History of the State of Ohio, Natural and Civil* (Cincinnati, 1838), 348.

⁹⁰ De Bow, *Statistical View*, 159.

Literature, Science, and the Arts

IN TRUTH, there are many reasons which render a very general diffusion of literature impossible in America. I can scarcely class the universal reading of newspapers as an exception to this remark; if I could, my statement would be exactly the reverse, and I should say that America beat the world in letters. The fact is, that throughout all ranks of society, from the successful merchant, which is the highest, to the domestic serving man, which is the lowest, they are all too actively employed to read, except at such broken moments as may suffice for a peep at a newspaper. It is for this reason, I presume, that every American newspaper is more or less a magazine, wherein the merchant may scan while he holds out his hand for an invoice, 'Stanzas by Mrs. Hemans,' or a garbled extract from Moore's *Life of Byron*."¹

Thus, the not unprejudiced Mrs. Frances Trollope described the American literary scene, as she had observed it, particularly during her residence in Cincinnati. It was true that Ohioans of that period were busy in the building of a material civilization in a region which had been primitive Indian country less than a half century before. They had not developed any deep-rooted cultural traditions or any substantial interest in literature and the arts. Accordingly, those who were moved to embark upon a career of letters were apt to encounter an indifferent public and a precarious struggle for a livelihood.

The considerable attention to newspapers—noted by Mrs. Trollope—made possible the establishment in Ohio of many such enterprises, of which in May, 1826, there were sixty. Some disappeared, but others (sometimes with a change of name) have continued down to the present. In the number of its papers, Cincin-

¹ Frances Trollope, *Domestic Manners of the Americans* (London, 1832), I, 128.

nati led with six, the most influential being the *Cincinnati Gazette*, edited by the able but highly individualistic Charles Hammond, whose claims to fame have been somewhat discounted because of his scurrilous attacks upon the reputation of Mrs. Andrew Jackson and because of his own overindulgence in the pleasures of the grog-shop. Yet, his writings at times were compared to those of Addison, and his editorial pen pleaded vigorously for neglected or unpopular causes.² Later, the *Gazette* was edited by John Crafts Wright, long a congressman and a leader in Ohio political life. In 1826 the chief competitors of the *Gazette* were the *National Republican* and the *Advertiser*, the latter edited by a politically-minded naturalized Irish-American, Moses Dawson. In 1841, Dawson disposed of this interest to John Brough (and his brother Charles), who had previously conducted the *Marietta Western Republican* and then the *Lancaster Ohio Eagle* (1833-1841). Renamed the *Enquirer*, this Cincinnati paper later (1844) became the property of James John Faran and Washington McLean, and soon ranked as the leading Democratic paper of the State.

The Columbus newspapers in 1826 were the *Ohio State Journal*, the *Western Statesman*, which merged with the *Journal* in 1828, and the *Ohio Monitor*. During this period probably the best-known publisher of the *Journal* was John Bailhache, who had previously conducted the Chillicothe (Ohio) *Supporter and Scioto Gazette*. The *Journal* generally supported National Republican and then Whig policies while the *Monitor* was a Jacksonian paper. In 1835, the latter was combined with another Columbus paper, the *Hemisphere*, the name of which was changed in 1837 to the *Ohio Statesman*. During practically all of the time from 1837 to 1853 this paper was edited by Samuel Medary, an aggressive politician, who was one of the leading Democratic journalists north of the Ohio River.

In 1826, the only newspaper in Cleveland was the *Herald* which remained throughout this period the principal paper of the town. Later, one of its competitors, the *Advertiser*, was purchased in 1841

² F. P. Weisenburger, *Life of Charles Hammond* (Columbus, 1934), *passim*.

by two Vermonters, J. W. and Admiral N. Gray, who changed the name to the *Plain Dealer*, a paper of increasing influence. Dayton had two papers, the *Watchman* and the *Miami Republican*. From time to time other publications were in circulation, among them the *Daily Empire* (the first permanent daily in the city) which from 1847 to 1855 was edited by the fiery Clement L. Vallandigham. Toledo of course had not been settled in 1826, but within a decade the *Toledo Herald* (later the *Gazette*) was being published, and soon the *Blade* began its long career. In many an Ohio community more than a century later newspapers, tracing their lineage back to the early presses of pioneer days, were still in existence. Some changed their names, but such papers as the *Lebanon Western Star*, the *Delaware Gazette*, the *Newark Advocate*, the *Painesville Telegraph*, and the *Chillicothe Scioto Gazette* survived without essential alteration of their titles.³ Incidentally, the chief newspaper published at Steubenville during most of the period was the *Western Herald and Steubenville Gazette* conducted by James Wilson (grandfather of the World War President) and his sons.⁴ Over a longer period (from 1815 to 1871) the grandfather of Mrs. William McKinley, John Saxton, controlled the influential *Canton Ohio Repository*. Less successful financially was William Cooper Howells, father of the famous novelist, who served as a journalist in various Ohio towns, raising a family of eight children on a meager income and transmitting to his gifted son (William Dean Howells) little in a material way, but much in integrity, ebullient humor, and a respect and talent for literary excellence.

To meet the needs of the steadily increasing German population of Ohio, various papers were published, including some of rather short duration. The *Adler des Westens* of Lancaster, Ohio (1800-1838), was the first German paper in Ohio. At Cincinnati the *Ohio Chronik* was established in 1826, followed by the *Weltbürger* (1834). The *Volksblatt*, founded in 1836, with Democratic

³ O. C. Hooper, *History of Ohio Journalism* (Columbus, 1933), 118-9.

⁴ F. P. Weisenburger, "Middle Western Antecedents of Woodrow Wilson," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* (Cedar Rapids, Iowa), XXIII (1936), 375ff.

political connections, soon had as a Whig competitor the *Westlichen Merkur*, which later became the *Deutsche im Westen*. After 1843 Karl Klauprecht published the earliest German illustrated journal in the United States, the *Fliegende Blätter*, in Cincinnati.⁵ In Columbus a number of German papers were published for brief periods before Jacob Reinhard and his partner, Louis Fieser, established the *Westbote* in 1843.

Even before 1825, the lack of appreciation of western tastes by eastern publishers and the difficulties of transportation over the mountains contributed to the establishment of periodicals in Ohio, and many more were to follow in succeeding years. In 1827, Timothy Flint, a native of Massachusetts, began the publication in Cincinnati of the *Western Monthly Review*. In the initial number he commented:

"We are a scribbling and forth-putting people. Little as they have dreamed of the fact in the Atlantic country, we have our thousand orators and poets. We have not a solitary journal expressly constituted to be the echo of literary public opinion. The teeming mind wastes its sweetness on the desert air. . . . Now we are of the number who are so simple as to believe that amidst the freshness of our unspoiled nature, beneath the huge sycamores of the Miami, or cooling the forehead in the breeze of the beautiful Ohio, and under the canopy of our Italian sky, other circumstances being equal, a man might write as well as in the dark dens of a city." This *Review* gave much attention to literary, religious, and historical matters of particular interest to westerners, but numerous articles were included that were more noted for their grave erudition than for their popular appeal, and no more numbers were issued after June, 1830.⁶

One of the contributors to the *Review* had been Judge James Hall, a son of cultured Philadelphia parents, who had set out for Illinois in 1820 and had there begun the publication of a pioneer

⁵ Gustav Körner, *Das Deutsche Element in den Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika, 1818-1848* (Cincinnati, 1880), 179-80.

⁶ W. H. Venable, *Beginnings of Literary Culture in the Ohio Valley* (Cincinnati, 1891), 69-71.

monthly magazine in 1830. By January, 1833, he had located in Cincinnati where he issued the initial number of the *Western Monthly Magazine, a Continuation of the Illinois Monthly Magazine*. Articles included pioneer reminiscences, historical and statistical data, scientific and literary discussions, as well as stories and poems. Among the contributors were such Ohio writers as Rev. James H. Perkins, a liberal Cincinnati clergyman; Benjamin Drake, a younger brother of the well-known Cincinnati physician and later the author of a *Life of Black Hawk*; Morgan Neville, a widely known lawyer, journalist and politician of Cincinnati; Otway Curry, the poet; and William Davis Gallagher, a journalist who was a native of Philadelphia but had spent his youth with his widowed mother in southwestern Ohio. Among the women contributors were Mrs. Caroline Lee Hentz, who conducted a Cincinnati private school and Harriet Beecher, daughter of the president of Lane Theological Seminary. Hall himself wrote extensively for the publication, and his reviews of current books were extremely caustic. In 1835, he came to the defense of the Roman Catholics, and he opposed immediate abolitionism. By his defense of the Catholics he aroused much criticism from supporters of Lyman Beecher, who had argued against the migration of ignorant foreigners, especially those of the Catholic faith, to the West, and who was strongly opposed to slavery. Hall's subscription list declined immediately, and in 1837, publication was discontinued. Hall, nevertheless, had won for himself a foremost place as a chronicler and interpreter of early western history.

From June, 1835, to April, 1841, there appeared in Cincinnati (except for a part of that time when Louisville, Kentucky, was the place of publication) a religious and literary magazine published under Unitarian auspices, the *Western Messenger*. Never possessing a large circulation, it was, however, distinguished by able editors (local Unitarian clergymen) and by the quality of its offerings, many of which had a distinct flavor of New England transcendentalism. From May, 1838, to the latter part of 1839 there was published, first at Columbus and then at Cincinnati, the *Hesperian*,

a magazine of diversified literary contributions with special emphasis on western themes. The editor, William D. Gallagher, wrote or secured many able articles for this periodical. Financial mismanagement and the acceptance by Gallagher of a promising connection with the *Cincinnati Gazette*, led to the suspension of the magazine. There were numerous enterprises of a similar type, including the *Western Literary Journal and Monthly Magazine* published at Cincinnati (1844-5) by Lucius A. Hine, a young man from Erie County who had just completed a law course in that city. Hine had been much influenced by the writings of Robert Owen and other reformers, and this periodical, as well as the Cincinnati publications in which he was later interested, the *Quarterly Journal and Review* and the *Herald of Truth*, contained various articles which advocated social and economic reform.

Among the best contributions by Ohioans to magazines published in the State during this period were "The Last of the Boatmen" by Morgan Neville; "Ellen Landon," "The Old and the Young Bachelor," and "The Ambitious Man," novelettes by Thomas H. Shreve; "The Heiress of Rock Hollow," a diverting picture of Dutch life by W. D. Gallagher; "The Doomed Wyandot" and "The Wolf Hunter" by Otway Curry; and "Dora McCrae," "The Hypochondriac," and "The Hole in My Pocket" by James H. Perkins. Among the earliest volumes of fiction written in the West and published in book form were novels by a young Cincinnati, Frederick W. Thomas, who wrote *Clinton Bradshaw*, a story of a lawyer's encounters in politics and at the bar; *East and West*; and *Howard Pinckney*.

The decade of the 1840's was one for which "blood and thunder" novels had a genuine attraction. Some of these appeared serially in newspapers or periodicals while others were published between the famed yellow paper covers. Among the most popular of the authors of such tales were two easterners who sojourned for a time in Ohio, Emerson Bennett and Edward Z. C. Judson. The former became the author of such best-selling thrillers as *Prairie Flower*; *Leni Leoti*; and *Forest Rose*. Judson, known in the West as "Ned

Buntline," resided for a time at Cincinnati where he laid the foundations for a long career as the chief dime-novelist of his generation. A prominent Cincinnati, William W. Fosdick, in 1851, published *Malmiztic, the Toltec, and the Cavaliers of the Cross*, an artistic and imaginative story, distinguished by accurate descriptions but stilted and ornate in style. It was based in part upon the author's travels in Mexico.

Every important religious sect had its press. The Presbyterian publications in Cincinnati had a heavy theological content. The arch-Calvinistic Joshua L. Wilson had established the *Pandect* in 1828, and when it passed into the hands of more liberal Presbyterians and became the *Cincinnati Journal*, he founded the conservative *Standard*. The *Presbyterian Quarterly Review* was another ably edited publication, and about 1840 Reverend Jonathan Blanchard (later president of Knox College) founded and edited the periodical which later had a long history as the *Herald and Presbyter*. The Methodists published the *Western Christian Advocate* at Cincinnati and also a publication for circulation among the Germans of the Mississippi Valley, the *Christliche Apologete*. In the Cincinnati vicinity (for many years at Carthage) the Disciples of Christ produced the *Evangelist*. As early as 1831, the Catholic newspaper of the Cincinnati diocese, the *Telegraph*, was established, and in 1837, the *Wahrheitsfreund*, for German-language adherents of that faith.

Many secular magazines were published especially for a feminine clientele. One of the earliest was the *Social Circle*, a monthly literary production established (1827) at Mount Pleasant by Miss Rebecca Bates. Beginning in January, 1830, a weekly (later fortnightly) *Ladies' Museum and Western Repository of Belle Lettres* was edited by Joel T. Case at Cincinnati. In October, 1831, this was merged with the *Cincinnati Mirror and Ladies' Parterre*, a new venture by John H. Wood, a Cincinnati bookseller. The editor was William D. Gallagher, who (with his brother Francis) had published the *Minerva*, a Cincinnati literary periodical, in 1826, and who had had considerable newspaper experience in that city.

He endeavored to present a western magazine worthy of comparison with its eastern prototypes and one which would include love stories characterized by realism rather than saccharin sentimentalism. Perhaps the most popular contributor was Mrs. Julia L. Dumont, a native of Ohio, but then a resident of Indiana. From 1833 to 1835 Thomas Hopkins Shreve was associated with Gallagher in the venture, the name being changed to *Cincinnati Mirror and Western Gazette of Literature and Science* with weekly rather than bi-weekly issues. After other changes, this western ladies' magazine *par excellence* ended its career in 1836.⁷ Other women's magazines of short duration were published at Zanesville, Akron, and Ohio City (Cleveland). Cincinnati had its share of unsuccessful ventures, but also one publication of remarkable endurance, the *Ladies' Repository* which served its public from 1841 to 1876. Like others of its type, it was not devoted to "household hints" of various kinds with menus to tempt the lagging appetite of the family, but rather, it sought to stimulate and develop feminine interest in religious and intellectual matters. Its sponsorship by the Methodist Church insured the decorous nature of the articles admitted to publication and probably contributed to their oppressive didacticism. The first editor was Leonidas Lent Hamline, later a Methodist bishop. In its initial year, a subscription list of five thousand was attained and an increase was noted thereafter until 1857, when there were about thirty-one thousand subscribers. Hamline rejected as unspiritual the reading of even moralistic fiction. Later editors assumed a more moderate policy but retained the essentially serious nature of the publication.

People of that time were much interested in accounts of pioneer life, and many articles in the magazines were devoted to such narratives. Among the more significant were the contributions on early Ohio history to Hall's *Western Magazine* by John H. James of Urbana. In 1833, Salmon Portland Chase, then a young Cincinnati lawyer, published a "Preliminary Sketch of the History of

⁷ Bertha-Monica Stearns, "Early Western Magazines for Ladies," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XVIII (1931), 319ff.

Ohio" as a part of his edition of the *Statutes of Ohio and of the Northwest Territory*. It has rightly been regarded as "the first systematic presentation of the history of the Buckeye State."⁸ Thereafter, writers occasionally risked the financial hazard of book-length historical volumes. In 1838 there appeared the first substantial *History of the State of Ohio* by Caleb Atwater, an eccentric Circleville lawyer. Henry Howe who visited him in 1846 described him as:

"A queer talker, [who] . . . appeared to me like a disappointed, unhappy man. One of his favorite topics was General Jackson, whose friendship he greatly valued. . . . His life appears to have been a struggle with penury. He did but little, if any law business; he had a large family, six sons and three daughters, and his books were but a meagre source of support, and these he sold by personal solicitation."⁹

In 1847, Jacob Burnet, venerable Whig politician and former United States senator, published his informative reminiscences of Territorial life in Ohio. These were entitled, *Notes on the Early Settlement of the Northwestern Territory*. In the same year, Henry Howe, a native of Connecticut, who had gained some repute as the author of historical works on New Jersey and Virginia, brought out the first edition of his *Historical Collections of Ohio*. This work was not, strictly speaking, a history of the State but an interesting, though somewhat rambling account of the people and the various places of Ohio, with interesting anecdotes relating to each. Howe traveled through Ohio in 1846–1847, gathering all sorts of facts, and recording the recollections of pioneer citizens as well as drawing sketches of the interesting spots which he visited. The year 1848 produced a valuable contribution by Samuel Prescott Hildreth, a Massachusetts-born physician and naturalist, who had settled in the Marietta vicinity in 1806. His *Pioneer History* described the earliest settlements in southeastern Ohio. Among similar publications were Charles Cist's historical sketches of Cin-

⁸ Venable, *Beginnings of Literary Culture*, 26.

⁹ Henry Howe, *Historical Collections of Ohio* (Columbus, 1889), II, 416.

cinnati and the West that had originally appeared in his *Advertiser* and were gathered into a volume, *The Cincinnati Miscellany; or, Antiquities of the West*. James H. Perkins' *Annals of the West* (1846) was popular enough to be reprinted in several editions.

As for poetry, Ohioans of this middle period found several factors conducive to efforts in that field. The passing of the frontier meant the attainment of a modicum of comfort, and in the absence of extensive diversions, the long winter evenings could be spent in trying one's skill in poetic composition. Hence, in 1824, the editor of a Cincinnati literary publication declined offers of poems with the comment, "Poetry is in so flourishing a state on our side of the river that the limits allotted to that department are preoccupied."¹⁰ Much of the poetic expression of the time was of the kind employed by the Ohio River boatmen. Handed on from person to person, and sometimes altered in the passing, ballads were seldom, if ever, committed to paper for later generations. Much poetry, moreover, was composed for an immediate political purpose as the campaign of 1840, when *The Tippecanoe Song Book* and other similar volumes were issued.

Numerous Ohio poets, on the other hand, were sensitive to eastern allusions to the West as the home of untutored and boisterous ruffians. In their efforts to display culture and erudition they became stilted and pedantic in their form of expression, characteristics which were not uncommon in the older sections of America. Thus, Thomas Hedges Genin, who aspired to be an epic poet, published *The Napolead* at St. Clairsville in 1833. Largely composed before his locating in Ohio, it was revised during his residence in the State. The narrative carried Napoleon from the campaign against Russia to exile at Elba, with an accompaniment of supernatural and allegorical personages. The author endeavored to use as many epic forms as possible, but the result was an overlong work which one writer has ranked very near the top in point of tediousness among all productions of western poetry.¹¹ Harvey D.

¹⁰ Venable, *Beginnings of Literary Culture*, 269.

¹¹ R. L. Rusk, *Literature of the Middle Western Frontier* (New York, 1926), I, 336.

Little, a native of Connecticut, who came with his parents to Franklin County, composed poems which gave evidence of imagination and lyrical quality, "Palmyra" and "On Judah's Hill," but he died at the age of thirty, in 1833, a victim of the cholera.

During the period just prior to 1850 the two Ohioans who shared—somewhat unequally—the highest poetic honors in the West were Otway Curry and William D. Gallagher whose close friendship of youthful days continued uninterrupted to the close of life. Born in Highland County in 1804, Curry as a young man in Cincinnati had often sat on the banks of the Ohio, playing the flute for the enjoyment of his friend. Later, the two had been associated in the editorship of the *Hesperian*. Curry's poetry is characterized by a meditative interest in themes removed from the sordid realities of the contemporary scene, as is indicated by the titles, "The Armies of the Eve," "The Lost Pleiad," and "To a Midnight Phantom." One stanza from the last-mentioned runs as follows:

"Thou hast revealed to me
The lore of phantom song,
With thy wild, fearful melody,
Chiming the whole night long
Forebodings of untimely doom
Of sorrowing years and dying gloom,
And unrequited wrong."

Similarly, his "The Lore of the Past" (1838) takes the reader for a diverting but not wholly satisfying sojourn into the realm of ancient history. Curry's poetry was pleasing and melodious, if not of first-rate brilliancy, but Gallagher was really preeminent among the early versifiers of Ohio. The latter, in an imitative age, followed the conventional patterns of classic poetry, but possessed originality enough to make an indelible impression upon the literary trends of the Middle West. It has, moreover, been suggested that eastern writers of far greater fame, notably Poe, were definitely indebted to him.¹²

¹² *Ibid.*, I, 339-40.

Gallagher's best productions were those which depicted the work of nature as seen in the Middle West, one of his most popular poems being called "Autumn." Others who found western themes for their writings were Charles A. Jones and Frederick William



21. WILLIAM DAVIS GALLAGHER
(1808-1894)

Prominent Ohio journalist and poet.
Courtesy of Venable Collection, Ohio
State Museum.

Thomas. Jones, who had come to Cincinnati as a child with his parents and remained in that vicinity most of his life until his death in 1851, wrote "The Outlaw" and shorter pieces such as "Tecumseh" and "The Old Mound." Thomas, born in Providence, R. I., came as a youth with his father to Cincinnati in 1829. His family, including his brother, Lewis Foulke Thomas, attained some measure of literary distinction, and he himself has already been mentioned as a novelist. Among the poets, F. W. Thomas is best known for his *The Emigrant; or, Reflections while Descending the Ohio*, written in Byronic fashion (1833).

A number of poets who later gained some distinction were, during this period, going through their early apprenticeship. In the front rank were Alice Cary (1820-1871) and her younger sister Phoebe (1824-1871), daughters of a poor but culturally ambitious family, which lived some miles north of Cincinnati, the homestead being called "Cloverbrook." In 1838, a poem by Alice, "The Child Sorrow" appeared in a Cincinnati newspaper, and subsequently she contributed to literary magazines. In 1849 a joint volume of the sisters' work greatly enhanced their already promising reputations, and in 1850, Alice moved to New York. Phoebe followed the next year, and thereafter the eastern metropolis was

their home. One who exerted a wide influence in a somewhat restricted field was Eliza Roxey Snow, who as a small child had come to Ohio from Massachusetts with her parents. Having gained considerable prominence as a poet, in 1835 she became a Mormon and removed to Kirtland. There she lived with the family of Joseph Smith and taught in a young ladies' select school. Going westward with the Mormon migration she became a wife of both Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, and as a Mormon poet she contributed much to the hymnology of that church.

Poetry was apt to be set to music in the services of the churches. Some was employed in the political campaigns of the times. Thus, in 1840 Alexander Coffman Ross of Zanesville, composed the words of "Tippecanoe and Tyler Too," to the popular tune of "Little Pigs." Before 1850, although various musical instruments were in common use, Ohio showed little musical development.¹³ A Haydn Society had been formed in Cincinnati as early as 1819, and an Apollonian Society in 1824. Almost a decade passed, however, before the city witnessed its first significant public musical presentation, when thirty-five instrumentalists and about a fifth as many vocal soloists assisted by a chorus, appeared in recital. Some churches were very conservative as to the propriety of instrumental music, and the First Presbyterian Church of Columbus obtained an organ only after considerable discussion and through the earnest efforts of the women of the congregation (about the year 1840).¹⁴

The coming of an extensive German migration to Cincinnati and other cities brought many persons with a highly developed love of music, uninhibited by doubts as to the worldliness of such forms of expression. In the new Catholic Cathedral, attended by many Germans, an organ had been installed in 1826. Around 1834 concerts were given each evening in the Western Museum by a group composed chiefly of Germans; and by 1850 the German sing-

¹³ For the role played by music in the life of early Ohioans, see W. T. Utter, *The Pioneer State, 1803-1825, History of the State of Ohio*, II.

¹⁴ C. T. Greve, *Centennial History of Cincinnati* (Chicago, 1904), I, 534; F. E. Marsten, *After Eighty Years* (Columbus, 1886), 31-2.

ing society (*Gesangverein*) and the annual singing festival (*Sängerfest*) were established institutions. In Columbus, a men's chorus (*Männerchor*) was organized as early as the fall of 1848.

In 1846 Stephen Collins Foster went to Cincinnati to act as bookkeeper for his brother. There he remained until the widespread enthusiasm for his ballads, "O Susanna," "Louisiana Belle," "Uncle Ned," and others, prompted his return to Pennsylvania to devote his whole time to musical composition.¹⁵ No other significant composer resided in Ohio during this period, but among the growing youth were Daniel Decatur Emmett, who spent his boyhood at Mt. Vernon, and much later became the author of "Dixie"; and Alfred Humphreys Pease, a native of Cleveland, who later won popularity as the author of "Stars of the Summer Night" and "Blow, Bugle, Blow."

Although painting and sculpturing might seem to be cultural developments to which a pioneer state could contribute little, in several Ohio communities, notably Cincinnati, rather substantial achievements were being made along these lines. This was due in part to the artistic tastes of the Germans, and in part to the desire of a generation, which did not enjoy the advantages of modern photography, to perpetuate the likenesses of distinguished or beloved individuals. During the 1830's, Harriet Martineau visited the studio of the painter, James Henry Beard, in Cincinnati and found that his works—especially his portraits of children—pleased her more than those of any other American artist.¹⁶ James Silk Buckingham, the English traveler, met William Henry Harrison in the same city in 1840 while Edward Augustus Brackett was modeling a bust of the general, which Buckingham compared favorably with the works of European artists "even when judged by the best standards."¹⁷ In the field of sculpturing Cincinnati was also the scene of the early efforts of the better known Shobal Vail

¹⁵ Raymond Walters, *Stephen Foster: Youth's Golden Gleam; a Sketch of His Life and Background in Cincinnati, 1846-1850* (Princeton, 1936).

¹⁶ Harriet Martineau, *Retrospect of Western Travel* (London, 1838), II, 236-7.

¹⁷ J. S. Buckingham, *Eastern and Western States* (London, 1842), II, 409.

Clevenger, Henry Kirke Brown, and Hiram Powers. All three of these profited by the instruction of a German modeler, Frederick Eckstein.

Clevenger, born on a farm near Middletown (1812) learned as a youth the trade of stone-cutting. In Cincinnati much artistic wood-carving was being done by a group of Westphalians, and the figure of a woman on top of the market house inspired in him a zeal for creative work. Accordingly, he labored for four years under the direction of a stone-cutter, David Guion, until his artistry excelled that of the master. Like Powers and Brown he became expert in making portrait busts of leading personalities of the time, such as Henry Clay and Harrison. In 1840 Nicholas Longworth furnished him with funds for study in Europe where he remained almost three years. Consumption, however, brought about his death on the homeward journey in the fall of 1843, but not until his skill had insured him a permanent, if modest position, in the history of American sculpturing. Brown, born in Massachusetts (1814), had received training as a portrait painter, and in 1836 he journeyed to Cincinnati with the intent of following his profession in that city. But there he became interested in sculpturing and embarked upon a career that gained him great distinction in that field and awakened among Americans for the first time an appreciation of the majestic possibilities of the monumental equestrian statue in bronze.¹⁸ Powers as a boy in Cincinnati had worked at whatever job opportunity offered. Afterwards he was employed in a clock and organ factory for six years (1822-1829) and then in the Western Museum (1829-1834) where he gained such proficiency in the creation of wax models that orders for portrait busts began to come to him. One of his earliest marble busts was that of Judge Jacob Burnet, a work now in the Cincinnati Museum of Art.¹⁹ Thus, his national reputation was established, and in 1834 he left Cincinnati for the larger opportunities of the United States

¹⁸ F. C. Sessions, "Art and Artists in Ohio," *Magazine of Western History* (Cleveland), IV (1886), 152-66, 314-26, 485-93.

¹⁹ E. M. Clark, *Ohio Art and Artists* (Richmond, Va., 1932), 135.

capital. He became the most influential American sculptor of his generation. A younger contemporary, but one whose major works were all created after 1850 was John Quincy Adams Ward, who was born near Urbana in 1830. As a child he enjoyed modeling clay images and found diversion in the shop of a village potter. In 1849 a visit to Brooklyn, New York, enabled him to arouse the interest of H. K. Brown, under whom he studied for seven years. Thus, he was prepared for a long career as one of the most prolific and masterful American sculptors of bronze and marble statues, in some respects the greatest artist thus far born in the "Buckeye" State.

Among the painters who resided in the State, the first to gain renown was Thomas Cole who was born in England in 1801. In 1819 his family located in Steubenville, and from 1820 to 1823 he lived in Ohio, making a precarious living as an itinerant portrait painter. His wide-spread reputation as a painter of landscapes—a pioneer in the so-called Hudson River school—was gained subsequent to his departure from Ohio, but his earlier impressions gained among the hills of the Ohio River Valley were of great significance for his career. Among the numerous portrait painters were William Watkins who came to Steubenville about 1840; Charles Soule, Sr., a native of Maine, who came to Ohio as a child and became a well-known artist in Dayton; and three residents of Marietta, Lily Martin, Sala Bosworth, and Charles Sullivan. Miss Martin was the daughter of a Frenchman who brought his family to Marietta in 1833. She early displayed talent for drawing in charcoal. Assistance from Nicholas Longworth enabled her to study in Cincinnati. Later, she painted many portraits in New York. Bosworth, a native of Massachusetts (1805) came as a boy of eleven with his parents to the vicinity of Marietta. Having developed a definite artistic bent, he went to Philadelphia in 1827 for art study. Thereafter he painted many portraits in the towns of south-central Ohio, usually receiving five dollars for each. His eyesight failed, however, and his later career was spent in the field of business. Sullivan, a native of Pennsylvania (1794) was a student

of the noted Thomas Sully. In 1833 he located in Marietta where he painted many portraits and historical views in the vicinity before his death in 1867.²⁰

Thomas Worthington Whittredge, born in Springfield (1820), as a young man received some art instruction in Cincinnati where he began to paint portraits. In 1849 he went abroad to study and later gained an enviable reputation as a nature painter, some of his works now being found in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Corcoran Gallery at Washington. Associated with both Cincinnati and Springfield was the Frankenstein family which emigrated from Germany in 1831 and located in Cincinnati. In 1849 they established themselves in Springfield. Several of the family were vitally interested in art, the most distinguished being Godfrey, who with the assistance of the family executed a vast panorama of Niagara, finally completed in 1866.²¹ One of the early painters in Cincinnati was Thomas Buchanan Read, who had gained some experience by chiseling figures on tombstones and by journeying through Ohio as an itinerant portrait painter. He received generous patronage from Nicholas Longworth and attempted a portrait of Harrison, which he modestly characterized as a "sad daub." In 1841 he departed for New York and Boston where he enjoyed a reputation as an artist and as a writer of both prose and poetry. Another who received aid from Longworth was William Henry Powell, a native of New York City (1823), but a resident of Cincinnati from early childhood. He first received instruction from Beard, and about 1840 went to New York for further study. In 1847, commissioned by Congress to paint a panel in the rotunda of the national Capitol, he selected "The Discovery of the Mississippi River by De Soto" as his theme. His numerous later works in the field of portrait and historical painting were marked with genuine excellence. Alexander Helwig Wyant, born in Tuscarawas County in 1836 and educated in the common school

²⁰ M. T. Nye, "Early Artists of Washington County," MS. (in Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Library, Columbus).

²¹ Henry Howe, *Historical Collections of Ohio* (Columbus, 1889), I, 404-5.



22. AVERY HOUSE, GRANVILLE

Erected about 1842; a fine specimen of the Classical Revival. Courtesy of Frank J. Roos, Jr.

at Defiance, early showed a decided aptitude for drawing but received little encouragement until 1857 when he obtained sympathetic approval from the well-known George Inness and later, financial assistance from Nicholas Longworth. He was destined to attain distinction as a landscape painter.

Some of the utility of portrait painting was lessened by the development of the daguerreotype. An amateur photographer, Alexander Coffman Ross of Zanesville, took the first picture of this kind ever taken west of New York (in 1839). The next year a Youngstown surgeon, Theodatus Garlick, who made a hobby of modeling and photography, took the first picture, at least west of the mountains, of a person who was not in the direct sunshine.²²

During the second quarter of the nineteenth century, an increasingly large number of families reached a degree of financial security which enabled them to indulge in homes of discriminating

²² *Dictionary of American Biography*, ed. by Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone (New York, 1928-1937), VII, 152.



23. ST. LUKE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, GRANVILLE
Erected in 1837; a splendid example of the Classical Revival.
Courtesy of Frank J. Roos, Jr.

taste. Because of the large migration to Ohio, especially the southern part, from Virginia and other southern states, homes patterned after mansions in the Old South might perhaps have been expected in considerable numbers. But, in view of the constitutional prohibition of slavery in Ohio, the wealthier southern families did not migrate to the State, and the southern architectural influence was relatively small. Nevertheless, houses with galleries and with flanking outbuildings, generally not connected with the main buildings except by walks, were numerous enough to indicate distinct southern tendencies. Homes located at some distance from the main road also showed the effect of planter traditions upon transplanted southerners. Georgian architecture, which had influenced building patterns along the northeast seacoast of America even before the Revolution, had sometimes been combined there with lighter forms used by the Adam brothers, distinguished English architects of the eighteenth century; and this combination of influences found belated expression in buildings in Ohio. Many doorways of Ohio homes were characterized by pilasters with Ionic or Doric capitals and heavy entablatures. By the decade of the 1830's, builders' handbooks were more commonly used in Ohio, and the so-called Classic Revival was definitely under way in the State, reaching its height during the next decade. Among the homes, churches and other public buildings erected after the classical forms (sometimes with modifications) were beautiful structures, as the Avery-Downer house and St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Granville, the Sturgis-Kennan-Fulstow house in Norwalk, and the court-houses at Fremont, Mt. Vernon and Dayton. (The common type of court-house, however, was a square building with a truncated hip-roof, a type never used extensively in the East, and possibly Ohio's only contribution to architectural forms). Before 1835, along the National Road and Zane's Trace in Ohio, many stone buildings had been erected, even in the rural districts. This indicated a definite Pennsylvania influence, for at that time only Pennsylvania and adjacent states used stone for buildings in the country areas. But by 1840, stone was used widely by persons who



24. OLD COURT-HOUSE, SOMERSET

An example of the typical county court-house in Ohio before 1850; erected in 1829. Courtesy of Frank J. Roos, Jr.

wished to exhibit the prosperity of their economic station. Alfred Kelley's home in Columbus was patterned after a widely publicized Ionic temple in Athens, Greece, expert stone-cutters from the Ohio canals being used to erect the residence in 1836.²³

One of the earliest sciences to attract interest in Ohio was archaeology. The presence of great numbers of mounds within the State's boundaries stimulated a curiosity regarding these phenomena. In 1820, Caleb Atwater of Circleville had written at length on the subject, and ten years later Harrison had published his *Discourse on the Aborigines of the Valley of the Ohio*. The first extensive study based upon scientific investigation, however, was *Ancient Monuments of the Mississippi Valley* (1848) by Ephraim George Squier and Edward Hamilton Davis.²⁴ Squier was publisher of the Chillicothe *Scioto Gazette*, and Davis was a physician of the same city who as a youth had become interested in the subject. The two joined in the exploration of a hundred mounds, many of which were obliterated with the coming of thickly settled communities; but their treatise remains of permanent value, according to a Swiss archaeologist, as "glorious a monument of American science, as Bunker's Hill is of American bravery."²⁵

Closely related to archaeology, with distinctly greater practical possibilities, was the science of geology. A stimulus to investigation in this field was the geological board created in 1837 and supported by State funds but unfortunately a football of politics.²⁶ A pioneer in geology was Dr. John Locke, proprietor of the Cincinnati Female Academy (1822-1835) but later professor at the Medical College in that city (1835-1853). His interest in geologic studies led to the publication of some of his findings in scientific journals. A man of broad interests, he was granted an award of \$10,000 by Con-

²³ I. T. Frary, *Early Homes of Ohio* (Richmond, Va., 1936), 29, 33, 72, 190, 204-8, 294; Frank J. Roos, Jr., "Investigation of the Sources of Early Architectural Design in Ohio," Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 1937, 84-91, 97-107.

²⁴ H. C. Shetrone, *Mound-builders* (New York, 1930), 17-25.

²⁵ American Philosophical Society, *Proceedings* . . . 1862 (Philadelphia), IX (1865), 111.

²⁶ Columbus *Ohio Statesman*, March 9, 1838.



25. JARED POTTER KIRTLAND (1793-1877)

A distinguished Ohio physician and scientist. Courtesy of Ohio State Museum.

gress in 1849 because of his invention of a new device for the recording of astronomical events. When the State Geological Survey was created a division of zoology was included, at first under the direction of Jared Potter Kirtland, a Connecticut Yankee and a graduate of Yale, who had come to the Western Reserve as a young man in 1823. Of broad intellectual sympathies, Kirtland (who was a successful physician) discovered certain important facts in regard to fresh-water mollusks and carried on successful experiments in floriculture, horticulture, and apiculture. Another Yale graduate, the son of a pioneer Columbus family, was the botanist William Starling Sullivant who published *A Catalogue of Plants, Native and Naturalized in the Vicinity of Columbus, Ohio* (1840). Developing an interest in mosses, he became the author of a two-volume, splendidly illustrated work on the subject in 1845-1846.

In a relatively simple society, the heavens seemed closer to the heart of man than in later mechanized decades, and astronomy became a subject of great interest to many. Yet, it was rather by chance that the leading astronomer of the West developed his professional interest. Ormsby MacKnight Mitchel, a native of Kentucky (1809), grew to manhood in Lebanon, Ohio, and was graduated at West Point (1829). Having left the army in 1832, he located in Cincinnati. Becoming a professor at Cincinnati College, he stimulated great enthusiasm for astronomy, not only among the students but among the townspeople as well. The result was the establishment of the first astronomical observatory of any significance in the United States and the erection in 1845 of the second largest telescope in the world (and incomparably the largest in the country) on the outskirts of Cincinnati. Later, he conducted for two years the first popular magazine for the dissemination of astronomical ideas. At this same time there was growing to manhood in northern Ohio a young man, John Nelson Stockwell, who was to become one of the leading astronomers of the Nation.

Probably the greatest scientific interest among professional men was medicine; and obviously, it bore a very vital relation to the wel-



26. OBSERVATORY AT CINCINNATI

A notable evidence of Ohio's interest in science before 1850. From B. J. Lossing, *A Pictorial Description of Ohio* (New York, 1850).

fare of the average layman. The common diseases were considered as almost unavoidable, necessary episodes in the journey of life. In a new country, moreover, hard work with inevitable exposure to the elements and to the possibility of accidents, resulted in many injuries and much illness. Tuberculosis was a foremost cause of death; agues and fevers of various types were prevalent; and, although smallpox was being conquered by the use of vaccine, from time to time the dreaded Asiatic cholera made its appearance. In the summer of 1832 it reached Cleveland, and in October it struck Cincinnati with such fury as to demoralize the city. Persons apparently in the best of health were stricken with the disease, and often in a relatively few hours succumbed to the mysterious malady. Cold weather checked its spread, but the next summer it reappeared with greater frightfulness and carried away hundreds in Cincinnati, Columbus, and other communities. At intervals until after the Civil War, it proved to be a threatening scourge, the State Constitutional Convention of 1850-1 being interrupted by its ghastly activity. Various theories were advanced as to the causes

and cure for cholera, but little scientific information was available. For more ordinary ailments, a host of rather primitive remedies were commonly used, among them snakeroot, catnip, pennyroyal, peppermint, tansy, turpentine, saffron, and slippery-elm.²⁷

As late as 1850, medical education was very limited. Efforts were made to regulate the profession, but these were not very restrictive until a much later time. The individual who more than any other endeavored to correct the inadequacies of the profession in Ohio was Daniel Drake, a native of New Jersey (1785) who was periodically associated with medical schools in Cincinnati from 1819 to 1852. He was instrumental in the establishment of the Medical College of Ohio (the forerunner of the University of Cincinnati Medical School), but his continuous services to any Ohio institution were never protracted. A man of high personal standards and of extreme sensitiveness to criticism, he easily became involved in wranglings with others who did not subscribe to his own code of professional ethics.²⁸

As late as the middle of the century a relatively few weeks of study and the acquisition of a few medical works and instruments constituted the standard professional equipment. The average Ohioan of that day was none too prosperous, and the compensation of the practitioner was generally rather meager. In the cities, especially Cincinnati, there were a few doctors of fashionable patronage who dressed in the height of style and charged lucrative fees. In 1821, the doctors of the "Queen City" had drawn up an elaborate "Code of Medical Police Rules and Regulations" for the profession with a list of authorized fees, ranging from fifty cents "for a visit" to \$75 "for a lithotomy." In the cities, prescriptions were often given to be filled at the drug stores, which in Cincinnati for some years after 1840 were generally conducted by Germans.²⁹ Yet, when a young physician asked for the hand of Duncan Mc-

²⁷ R. C. Buley, "Pioneer Health and Medical Practice in the Old Northwest," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XX (1934), 497ff.

²⁸ E. D. Mansfield, *Memoirs of the Life and Services of Daniel Drake* (Cincinnati, 1855), 395-7.

²⁹ Otto Juettner, *Daniel Drake and His Followers* (Cincinnati, 1909), 85-97.

Arthur's daughter in marriage in 1830 that old pioneer commented that it was indeed a recommendation to be able to write "a handsome communication for a medical journal" but that the practise of medicine in Ohio was "generally a poor and miserable business" which seldom afforded "the means of a decent support to those" who followed it.³⁰

The average physician often had to be satisfied with a quarter or a half dollar for a visit. He commonly made his own pills and elixirs, employed much calomel, and made frequent use of the lancet for bleeding.³¹ The country doctor was often paid in produce. Braving all kinds of weather, he was a tireless messenger of mercy, sparing neither time nor effort in an unselfish endeavor to relieve pain, to strengthen the diseased, and to give comfort to the dying. Something of the work of the pioneer physician is illustrated by the career of John Lambert Richmond of Newton, Ohio. In April, 1827, he was called to the bedside of a young colored woman who was in convulsions following thirty hours of unsuccessful labor in childbirth. The cabin had neither floor nor chimney, but Richmond determined that an operation was necessary and thereupon performed the first successful Caesarean operation reported to the medical press in the United States (although not the first one actually performed). The life of the mother was saved, though the child did not survive. Innovations were often introduced by members of the teaching staff of the medical schools. Thus, Reuben Dimond Mussey of the Medical College of Ohio (Cincinnati) was a pioneer in employing ether and chloroform for purposes of anaesthesia, reporting such use to the profession in 1848.

Another significant personality in the medical profession in Ohio was William Maclay Awl who located at Lancaster in 1826. He gained wide repute as the first western surgeon to succeed in tying the left carotid artery (1827). Having moved to Columbus (1833), he developed a marked interest and ability in controlling the insane. Another physician, Marmaduke Wright, and Awl were

³⁰ Duncan McArthur to E. Coons, Feb. 28, 1830, McArthur MSS.

³¹ Various articles in *O.S.A.H. Quar.* (Columbus), XLVIII, 181-256.

elected to the Ohio legislature where they successfully agitated for State-financed care of the insane. Awl became the first superintendent of the Ohio State Hospital (opened in 1838), but his arduous work with the insane did not deter him from advocating successfully the establishment of State schools in Ohio for both the feeble-minded and the blind.³²

³² *Dict. of Amer. Biog.*, I, 446.

CHAPTER VIII

The Rise of Jacksonian Democracy

THE year 1825 opened in Ohio with the congressmen of the State in Washington sorely perplexed as to the attitude which they should take in the choice of a President, for the decision had to be made in that year by the national House of Representatives. At the same time the State legislators at Columbus were deeply concerned over the problems of the creation of an Ohio canal system and the establishment of free public schools. Early in the new year definite conclusions were to be reached on all of these issues.

In the Presidential election of 1824, Ohio's electoral vote had gone for Henry Clay, popularly known as "Harry of the West" and a frequent visitor in Cincinnati and Columbus. Since no candidate had received a majority of the electoral vote of the Nation as a whole, the choice had devolved upon the House of Representatives. Some impression of the attitude of the Ohio members of Congress can be gleaned from a letter written by one of them in December: "It is impossible for me to predict who will be our next President. It is not yet certain whether Clay or Crawford will come into the house. If Louisiana has given an entire vote for Mr. Clay he will be the third highest, otherwise Crawford, but I do not consider that it will make any difference, either way, Jackson or Adams will be the next President if one is elected. Mr. Clay has more personal friends than either of the candidates and there is a majority who are better satisfied with his talents and policy than with either of the other candidates but the members will generally consider themselves bound by the sentiments expressed by their constituents."¹

¹ Elisha Whittlesey to George Tod, Washington, Dec. 12, 1824, Western Reserve Historical Society, *Publications* (Cleveland), no. 95 (1915), 162-3.

By the middle of December it had become clear that Clay had been eliminated from the contest (since he was not one of the three highest in the electoral college) and that William Harris Crawford's ill health had reduced the choice, in reality, to a preference for John Quincy Adams or Andrew Jackson. Ohio's congressional delegation, therefore, faced the choice of favoring a northerner or a westerner, with some considerations drawing the members in either direction and with no direct means of determining the popular will. The intention of Clay to use his influence for Adams was known to his close friends by the middle of December, and he later marshaled the testimony of David Trimble and John J. Crittenden of Kentucky to show that as early as October, 1824, he had declared privately that he would not vote for Jackson.

Many of the well-established political leaders of Ohio were inclined to look upon Jackson as a mere "military chieftain." They preferred Adams as a man of ability and experience. John McLean, postmaster-general and at that time Ohio's most distinguished son in Washington political circles, expressed his opinion "decidedly" in favor of Adams. Allen Trimble, governor-elect of Ohio, wrote: "I very much regret that our friend Clay is excluded from the house of Reps. as one of three from whom the President is to be taken[;] between those returned I have but little choice, but believe the '*reflecting*' part of the people would prefer Adams to Jackson, but I have no doubt but Jackson would in an election, have a majority of votes."² During the early weeks of January, however, members of the Ohio delegation were extremely taciturn in expressing their preferences. Ohio's leading editor commented: "I cannot but admire the dignified reserve of our members of Congress in this present '*eventful crisis*.' Like circumspect jurymen let out to eat and sleep they forbear all conversation upon the subject under trial before them."³

Even in a family letter Duncan McArthur, one of the Ohio congressmen, expressed himself with remarkable caution as follows:

² To Duncan McArthur, Columbus, Ohio, Dec. 22, 1824, McArthur MSS.

³ F. P. Weisenburger, *Life of Charles Hammond* (Columbus, 1934), 39.

"I find that my friends differ so much in opinion as to the person proper to be supported for President, that I shall be under the necessity of exercising my own judgment upon that important subject. It is yet uncertain whether Ohio will support Adams or Jackson, but it is now pretty certain that the vote of Ohio and its influence will make the choice between those two great men."⁴

Already the drift of opinion was definitely toward Adams, and on January 19, another member of the Ohio delegation wrote to Ohio, to declare his intention of voting for Adams and to express his belief that a majority of Ohio congressmen would do likewise. "I do not know how the people of Ohio would vote as between Jackson and Adams," he said, "but I am convinced that Adams is best qualified, and that is enough for me."⁵ In the House election Congressmen Mordecai Bartley, Philemon Beecher, Duncan McArthur, William McLean, John Sloane, Joseph Vance, Samuel Finley Vinton, Elisha Whittlesey, John Crafts Wright, and John Patterson voted for Adams; William Wilson and Thomas Ross for Crawford; and James William Gazlay and John Wilson Campbell, from the southwestern part of the State, for Jackson. The last two mentioned clearly followed the wishes of their constituents, for their districts were overwhelmingly for Jackson. Wilson and Ross, who voted for Crawford, represented districts which were decidedly for Clay and Jackson respectively. Of the districts whose congressmen voted for Adams, the New Englander was first choice in only one (the eastern part of the Western Reserve). On the other hand, Jackson, in addition to being first choice in the two districts whose representatives voted for him and in one which in the House went for Crawford, was the favorite in two whose congressmen voted for Adams, the region around Wooster and that around Steubenville.⁶

It was perhaps to be expected that the Jacksonians would be

⁴ Duncan McArthur to Thomas J. McArthur, Washington, Jan. 21, 1825, McArthur MSS.

⁵ Philemon Beecher to Ephraim Cutler, in J. P. Cutler, *Life and Times of Ephraim Cutler* (Cincinnati, 1890), 193.

⁶ For table showing rankings of the popular vote by congressional district, see p. 237.

aroused by Ohio's vote in the House of Representatives for a candidate who had received a plurality of the popular votes in only one congressional district, who was second highest in only five, and who had received only two-thirds as many popular votes as Jackson. Support of both the Adams and Jackson tickets had not been uniformly distributed throughout the State. But Jackson's popularity seems to have been spreading rapidly at the time of the election while there is reason to believe that the strength of Adams was dwindling. Friends of Adams and Clay, however, insisted that the Constitution gave Congress discretion among the three highest candidates and that Congress was in no way bound to select Jackson.⁷ At any rate, a majority of the state delegations in Congress joined with that of Ohio, and Adams became the sixth President of the United States. Previous to this decision by Congress, charges had been made that a bargain had been struck by which Clay's support of Adams had been obtained by a promise of the former's appointment as secretary of state. Bitterness resulted between the Clay-Adams men and the Jacksonians. McArthur appealed to heaven to keep the country from such a man as Jackson for President.⁸

With Adams' election an accomplished fact, Clay received the foremost cabinet post, and at once partisans of Jackson in Ohio, as elsewhere, pointed to what they considered obvious proof of the "corrupt bargain" charge. Adams retained as postmaster-general (not yet a cabinet position) John McLean of Ohio, but Clay's appointment to the higher place stifled any enthusiasm which the Ohioan might have developed for the Administration. McLean's attitude was dictated not by moral scruples aroused by the bargain charge but by his own personal ambition. The postmaster-general's aspirations, according to unprejudiced observers in Ohio, answered "to descriptions in Milton," and Clay stood like a "Lion in his Path."⁹

⁷ *Cincinnati Gazette*, Jan. 25, 1825.

⁸ Duncan McArthur to T. J. McArthur, Washington, Feb. 2, 1825, McArthur MSS.

⁹ F. P. Weisenburger, *Life of John McLean* (Columbus, 1937), 50.

During the opening months of 1825 the politicians and editors of Ohio had been keenly interested in the outcome of the Presidential contest and the policies of the new Chief Executive, but the rank and file of the people of the State were at least equally concerned about the policies of the Ohio legislature. One Chillicothe politician wrote: "Here, we all are so much taken up with the projected canal, that we have almost lost sight of the Presidential question."¹⁰ In January, 1825, as already pointed out, legislation was passed by both houses for the construction of a State canal system. It was later asserted that no real "argument was needed on the floor of either house. The requisite votes were pledged outside."¹¹ As a result, Ohio prepared for a task which the *Washington National Intelligencer* called "a stupendous undertaking, with reference to its magnitude and cost" for so young a State.¹²

The same session of the legislature provided for the establishment of the first uniform system of free schools in the State¹³ and for the election of a United States senator. The last was postponed to the latter part of the session so as not to arouse antagonism previous to the disposal of the canal program. William Henry Harrison of Hamilton County, of Tippecanoe fame during the War of 1812; Wyllys Silliman, an early resident of Marietta who had been a lawyer in Zanesville for many years and was described as one who had "never been a sneaking Democrat, Hornblower, or anything of the kind"; Thomas Worthington of Chillicothe, one of the veteran politicians of the State and a former governor and United States senator; and Ethan Allen Brown of Cincinnati, former governor and father of the Ohio canals, were the candidates.

During the deliberations of the legislature Worthington and Harrison spent some time in Columbus among the members, "as busy as if their salvation depended on their efforts." Friends of Silliman were active in his behalf.¹⁴ A story was circulated that

¹⁰ Anthony Walke to Duncan McArthur, Jan. 28, 1825, McArthur MSS.

¹¹ W. W. Williams, *History of the Firelands* (Cleveland, 1879), 437.

¹² Feb. 15, 1825.

¹³ See Chapter VI, p. 165.

¹⁴ Allen Trimble to Duncan McArthur, Columbus, Dec. 22, 1824.

Harrison had seduced a doctor's daughter, and for a time this threatened to destroy his chances, but he was chosen on the fourth ballot.¹⁵

As the canal program became law, persons who opposed it were termed "Bucktails" and were accused of selfishly seeking the interests of their own locality. Hence, only four out of forty-eight prominent Ohio papers opposed the program. For some time, however, the north central and extreme eastern portions of the State, which were not to be touched immediately by the canal system, objected. This viewpoint was reflected in local politics, especially in the vicinities of Steubenville, Painesville, St. Clairsville, and Sandusky.¹⁶ Opposition died slowly but surely, since acquiescence in existing law seemed to be unavoidable. In March Alfred Kelley declared that opposition in the Sandusky Valley was "the ebullition of envy, jealousy, and local enmity" and would soon "spend itself in wind and froth."¹⁷ But, in the fall elections the canal question was still an issue in the disaffected districts of the State. Candidates for the legislature in Seneca and Sandusky counties, running on a platform opposed to the canals were elected over the members of the previous legislature who had voted for the bill. In Geauga County, John Hubbard, a representative who had opposed the canals, was reelected. In Medina County, however, the representative who had voted against the new program was defeated, and in Belmont County, a disgruntled region, a candidate for the legislature openly avowed that he was not an anticanal man, since three-fourths of the next assembly, and nine-tenths of the people of the State would favor the program.¹⁸

¹⁵ The vote was as follows:

	Harrison	Silliman	Worthington	Brown
First ballot	38	34	19	15
Fourth ballot	58	44	3	2

Alfred Kelley to Ethan A. Brown, Columbus, Jan. 28, 1825, Brown MSS.; Cincinnati *Advertiser*, Feb. 9, 1825.

¹⁶ Columbus *Gazette*, Mar. 4, 1825; Painesville (Ohio) *Telegraph*, Feb. 19, May 14, 1825.

¹⁷ Kelley to Brown, Cleveland, Mar. 11, 1825, Brown MSS.

¹⁸ Cleveland *Herald*, Oct. 21, 1825.

Elsewhere, interest in the State elections of 1825 was very lukewarm. In some portions of the State candidates for the legislature had no opposition, and townships which could poll 100 to 180 votes gave less than ten. At Painesville, due to lack of interest the polls were not even opened.¹⁹ Parties as organized means of political expression did not exist, and when the new legislature convened on December 5, Allen Trimble of Hillsboro was chosen speaker of the Senate without opposition. William W. Irwin of Lancaster was chosen speaker of the House. Trimble's election was contested on the ground that he was a commissioner of the canal fund, but the Committee of Privileges and Elections reported in his favor, and he was seated. To avoid further objection, however, he resigned from the canal commission, retaining the speakership which he had held since 1818.²⁰

One of the most significant discussions in the legislative session of 1825-6 involved the repeal of the law of January 29, 1821, "to withdraw from the Bank of the United States the protection and aid of the laws of this State, in certain cases." It was alleged during the discussion, that an agent of the Bank had threatened the recorder of Clermont County with ruin if he did not procure the repeal, but the bill passed, and the "bank war" in Ohio ended.²¹

During the summer of 1826 it became evident that Governor Jeremiah Morrow would not be a candidate for another term. Numerous possibilities for the position were mentioned, including Allen Trimble, Benjamin Tappan, Duncan McArthur, Thomas Worthington, Calvin Pease, Ethan Allen Brown, and John Wilson Campbell.²² Worthington's health was poor; McArthur decided to run for Congress; and the race finally narrowed down to Trimble, Tappan, Alexander Campbell and John Bigger. Trimble had been born in Virginia in 1783 of Scotch-Irish forebears. When only eleven months old, his family had removed to Kentucky, and

¹⁹ Painesville *Telegraph*, Oct. 15, 1825.

²⁰ Allen Trimble, *Autobiography and Correspondence* (Columbus, 1909), 141.

²¹ Columbus *Ohio State Journal*, Jan. 12, 1826; Ohio Laws, Statutes etc., *Statutes of Ohio* (ed. by Salmon P. Chase), III, 1522.

²² Thomas Worthington to John McLean, Chillicothe, June 1, 1826, McLean MSS.

in 1805 to Ohio. He had served in the War of 1812 and in the legislature for a decade after 1816. In 1822, due to the resignation of Brown, he had served as acting governor. Tappan was an able Massachusetts Yankee (born in 1773) who had come to Ohio in 1799, the first white settler in what is now Portage County. Locating in Steubenville in 1809, he had served as common pleas judge for many years. He was cross-eyed, and rather peculiar in appearance; having reacted violently against the narrow religious atmosphere of his early environment, he was outspoken in his theological skepticism and a sarcastic individualist in other phases of life. Campbell, a native of Virginia (born in 1779), lived in eastern Tennessee and in Kentucky before locating in what is now Brown County in 1804. He had practised medicine, had engaged in the mercantile business, and had served many years in the State legislature. Bigger was a Pennsylvanian by birth but had been a pioneer settler in the Miami Valley. He had been elected to the Territorial legislature and after 1803 had served regularly in the Ohio House or Senate (until 1833), being speaker of the House, 1821-22.

During the fall of 1826, Tappan was reported to have "returned from Miami County confident of success," probably because of his friendliness toward Jackson, but the Presidential question was not widely agitated in reference to the governorship.²³ Almost everywhere Allen Trimble was considered the leading candidate. He had long been widely known in Ohio political circles, and his former connection with the Canal Fund Commission may have made him unusually popular at this time. At any rate, the Jacksonian *Western Tiller* at Cincinnati mentioned no other candidate for the office. In that city he received all but fifty out of approximately 2,275 votes, and on the Western Reserve his vote was practically unanimous. In the State the final vote was: Trimble, 71,475; Campbell, 4,765; Tappan, 4,192; and Bigger, 4,114.²⁴

Though the Presidential question was not a dominant factor in

²³ Whittlesey to *id.*, Canfield, Aug. 31, 1826, *ibid.*

²⁴ Cincinnati *Western Tiller*, Sept. 29, 1826; St. Clairsville (Ohio) *Gazette*, Dec. 20, 1826.

this election, the ties of party were slowly drawing into opposite folds those of opposing political ideas. The House election of 1825 had tended to create a division of opinion. Later on, especially in view of the definite and pronounced stand of Adams in favor of the nationalistic viewpoint, it was asserted that doubts as to Jackson's advocacy of internal improvements and the tariff had helped to determine the vote of the Ohio delegation. Duncan McArthur wrote: "The course which General Jackson, and many of his friends in Congress had pursued, with regard to Internal Improvements, and the bill for the revision of the Tariff . . . put it out of our power to support the pretensions of the General, without at the same time abandoning what we conscientiously believed to be our duty." Others who had been congressmen in 1825 voiced similar views.²⁵ But undoubtedly personality was more important than political viewpoints. Adams' New England supporters were by no means all enthusiastic in their support of the American System. Moreover, McArthur testified that his first choice in 1824, after Clay, had been Crawford, and that this preference had been shared by several other members of the Ohio delegation. But Crawford, as regards his attitude toward the American System, could hardly have been as satisfactory as Jackson. A number of Ohio congressmen agreed essentially with the viewpoint of Beecher who asserted in 1827: "Mr. Clay, and his friends preferred Mr. Adams to General Jackson merely because they believed he, in a more eminent degree, possessed the qualifications necessary to the able duties assigned by the Constitution and Laws to the president of the United States." In 1826, John Patterson, candidate for reelection from the St. Clairsville district, which in 1824 had given Clay 1,487 votes, Jackson 509, and Adams 303, defended his vote for Adams in the House: "With me the choice was between a highly distinguished General and a long tried statesman—I chose the latter, and my conscience still approves the act."²⁶

²⁵ Duncan McArthur to Tobias Watkins, Chillicothe, May 18, 1827, Clay MSS. (in Library of Congress); letters from other Ohio congressmen to *id.*, *ibid.*

²⁶ St. Clairsville Gazette, Aug. 5, 1826.

Thus, most congressmen representing Ohio at this time, like most leaders of established political prestige, became supporters of the Adams Administration. They believed that civil training was a necessary qualification for high public office. Many were former New Englanders; most of them had seen long public service in Ohio. Beecher had come from Litchfield, Connecticut, in 1801. Wright, a native of the same state, had come to Ohio in 1810 and had served in the national House of Representatives since 1821.²⁷ Whittlesey and Vinton were both natives of Connecticut, and the former had been a member of the Ohio bar since 1806. Sloane had lived in Ohio since before the region had become a State, and had been in the Ohio legislature as early as 1804 and in the United States House of Representatives in 1819. Bartley had come from Pennsylvania in 1809, had been a captain in the War of 1812, and had been elected to the Ohio Senate in 1818. McLean had been for a period receiver of public monies at Piqua.

With this background in mind it is easier to understand the forces that were uniting to form an Administration party. In Ohio this group tended to enroll in its ranks those who enjoyed a favored economic position. McArthur, a leader among the Ohio Congressmen in 1824, had extensive land claims in the upper Little Miami Region, and in 1822 had employed Clay as his attorney. It had been charged that the former's interest in this matter, involving about eighty thousand dollars, underlay his desire for reelection to Congress in 1824, and this allegation may have been the reason for his defeat. McArthur's claims were to be crowned with success in Congress in May, 1830, and he became one of the wealthiest men in the State, having almost \$32,000 loaned at interest in Ohio and Kentucky in 1832.²⁸ By that time he had become a stockholder in the Bank of Chillicothe. Vance, another prominent Ohio congressman, was active in pressing McArthur's claims at the same time that he was writing²⁹ to the land magnate asking his signature to the re-

²⁷ J. B. Doyle, *20th Century History of Steubenville and Jefferson County* (Chicago, 1910), 137.

²⁸ McArthur MSS., *passim*.

²⁹ Joseph Vance to Duncan McArthur, Washington, Dec. 22, 1825, *ibid*.

newal of a note for \$2,000. Benjamin Ruggles, who showed himself favorable to the Administration and was elected president of the Belmont Bank of St. Clairsville in 1827, received the aid of McArthur in his contest for reelection to the Senate, at the same time promising assistance to McArthur's claim. Whittlesey during this period was a stockholder in the Western Reserve Bank of Warren and was to become an attorney for the institution. Vinton, another of the Ohio congressional delegation, a few years later was able to subscribe for a large block of stock in the Franklin Bank of Cincinnati, while during 1825 William Creighton, Jr., elected to Congress as an administration member at the next election (1826), was using his influence to retain a branch of the United States Bank at Chillicothe.³⁰

At the same time the adherents of Jackson were being recruited from among those who had recently come into the State and from the young men who had become of age since the death of the old Federalist Party. One of these Jacksonians, Caleb Atwater, spoke with pride of the democracy of a State where the "humblest citizen" could "approach his Governor or any Head of a Department, without any introduction or even a card containing his address and place of residence."³¹ Even the existing type of democracy in Ohio, however, did not satisfy many of the new generation, who possessed no material wealth themselves, and did not intend that the advantages it could supply should be qualifications for office. As an illustration of the trend of the times, in 1825 James B. Gardiner, who in 1828 was to be the editor of a Jackson paper, was elected to the Ohio House of Representatives on a pledge that one-third of his salary should be returned to the county treasury. The House refused to seat him, being of the opinion that his pledge had been in essence a bribe; at a new election he was again elected, but his seat once again was declared vacant. In the next year Daniel Reynolds of Brown County was suggested as a candidate for the legislature, not only as a supporter of Jackson but as one who

³⁰ William Creighton, Jr., to Henry Clay, Chillicothe, Nov. 14, 1825, Clay MSS.

³¹ Address at U. S. Court-house in Columbus, in *Ohio State Journal*, July 5, 1827.

would serve for sixty-eight cents a day.³² In 1828 in the St. Clairsville district the Administration candidate for reelection to Congress, who had been a former member of the State Senate, was successfully opposed by a Jacksonian, who, according to a local editor, did "not know whether the Sandwich Islands are situated in the Atlantic, Pacific, or Indian Ocean" and could not "tell the name of the king of England, whose government was usurped by Cromwell; the year in which the treaty of peace was concluded, which terminated the Revolutionary War; or whether Baffin's Bay is situated to the North or South."³³ A leading reason for supporting Jackson himself, according to Bela Latham, later to be postmaster at Columbus was that he was "without family pride," while the Franklin County Jacksonians expressed confidence in their hero as one "not raised in the lap of luxury and wealth" or securing his knowledge "from Voltaire, and Oriental legends."³⁴ Yet, a number of men of prominence, such as ex-Governor Ethan A. Brown, Robert Lucas, Micajah T. Williams, and Benjamin Tappan joined the Jackson forces.

As already indicated, partisan questions had not entered into the choosing of the legislature in the fall of 1825. Both houses elected at that time had been favorable to the Administration, and the Ohio House of Representatives on January 10, 1826, unanimously refused to concur in the resolutions of the legislature of Tennessee, proposing an amendment to the United States Constitution in regard to Presidential elections, an acceptance of which might well have been considered a victory for Jacksonism.

Although the Presidential question was not emphasized in the contest for the governorship in 1826, it was involved in the elections to Congress and the State legislature. The Jacksonians, however, were not thoroughly organized, and many of the Administration candidates had the advantage of being experienced politicians

³² *Cincinnati Gazette*, Jan. 13, 1826; *St. Clairsville Gazette*, Jan. 21, 1826; *Ohio State Journal*, Aug. 27, 1827.

³³ *St. Clairsville (Ohio) National Historian*, Sept. 13, 1828.

³⁴ *Ohio State Journal*, Oct. 9, 1828; Nov. 29, 1827.

who were candidates for reelection. All eight of the congressmen who had voted for Adams in 1825 and were seeking reelection were victorious.³⁵ In 1826 three other Administration candidates were successful. William Wilson, who had voted for Crawford in 1825, was claimed by some administration papers for their party, but others pointed out his Jacksonism, and he was opposed by three Administration candidates.³⁶ William Russell, a successful Jackson contestant, received only 2,111 votes to 3,833 for the three Administration candidates. General James Findlay, successful candidate from the Cincinnati district, was the only Jacksonian congressman to receive a majority of the votes cast in his district in this election.³⁷ The success of the Administration in Ohio caused great rejoicing among its supporters, and John Quincy Adams confided to his diary, "The issue of the New Jersey and Ohio elections to Congress has been gratifying."³⁸ One successful congressional candidate declared that the election results had sealed Jackson's defeat in the State, but another Ohio congressman pointed out that the results could not be "considered as representing a true test of administration and Jackson strength."³⁹

The new legislature, which convened on December 2, chose officers friendly to the Administration. About forty Jackson men had seats in this body, and the friends of the Administration were eager to avoid any dissensions in their own ranks which might enable the Jacksonians to elect the United States senator, who was to be chosen from Ohio in that year. Ruggles, the incumbent, had already served two terms, but the Cincinnati *Gazette* did not favor pushing the idea of rotation "to a very injurious extent." The St. Clairsville *Gazette* which had already declared for Jackson, took

³⁵ The other two who had voted for John Quincy Adams, Duncan McArthur and John Patterson, were "lame ducks" at the time of the House election, having been defeated in the fall of 1824.

³⁶ *Western Herald and Steubenville [Ohio] Gazette*, Oct. 21, 1826.

³⁷ Chillicothe (Ohio) *Scioto Gazette*, Nov. 2, 1826.

³⁸ John Quincy Adams, *Memoirs*; ed. by C. F. Adams (Philadelphia, 1874-7), VII, 161.

³⁹ John Sloane to Clay, Wooster, Oct. 16, 1826, Clay MSS.; John C. Wright to Duncan McArthur, Steubenville, Nov. 14, 1826, McArthur MSS.

the same point of view, declaring that Ruggles was satisfactory on internal improvements and that it was needless to change.⁴⁰ Certain personal objections were raised against Ruggles, but in his favor were his experience, his support of the Administration in the winter of 1825-6, and the lack of a single formidable opponent. McArthur was mentioned for the position, but his extensive land claims demanded his attention and would have been used as an objection to his candidacy. McArthur threw his influence to Ruggles who had been well disposed toward his claims and now would have an additional motive for supporting them.⁴¹ McArthur did not favor a "yankee" candidate, like Wyllys Silliman, and Ruggles actively solicited McArthur's support with a promise to further his land claim. "Whatever I can do," he wrote, "to get it through the Senate shall be done."⁴² The candidates for the senatorship besides Ruggles were William W. Irwin of Lancaster and Silliman of Zanesville. On January 20, fifteen ballots were taken without any candidate receiving a majority. A week later nine more ballots had to be taken before Ruggles secured the election. The successful candidate wrote McArthur thanking him for his support. At the same time he was active in behalf of the claims of his Ohio friend.⁴³

At this time Ohioans were very much interested in a plan which, if successful, would have added materially to the advantage of the Administration. It was widely rumored that John McLean, postmaster-general from Ohio, though an officer of the Adams Administration, was in reality friendly to Jackson. Consequently many Administration leaders favored his removal, but that course seemed unwise both because of his able services to the Post-Office Department and because of his strong following among his coreligionists, the Methodists. Others suggested that, in view of the congestion of business before the Supreme Court, the membership of that body

⁴⁰ *Cincinnati Gazette*, Nov. 17, 1826; *St. Clairsville Gazette*, Dec. 23, 1826.

⁴¹ Vance to Duncan McArthur, Washington, Dec. 4, 1826; R. Kercheval to *id.*, Chillicothe, Dec. 30, 1826, McArthur MSS.

⁴² Benjamin Ruggles to Duncan McArthur, Sen. Chamber, Jan. 1, 1827, *ibid.*

⁴³ *Ohio State Journal*, Jan. 25, Feb. 1, 1827; Ruggles to Duncan McArthur, Washington, Feb. 11, 1827; Vance to *id.*, Feb. 11, 1827, McArthur MSS.

should be increased by three judges, and that McLean should be appointed to one of the positions. The Jacksonians, however, devised a strategy to defeat the legislation, and McLean continued as postmaster-general through the Adams Administration.⁴⁴

Early in 1827, the Presidential campaign of 1828 gathered momentum. Lines of cleavage had been forming earlier. The Adams and Clay men seemed to favor a government by men of property and political experience. On the other hand, the Jacksonians represented the spirit of a rising, virile, if crude, democracy which maintained that the most popular, not necessarily the most highly competent candidate, should have received the vote of the Ohio delegation in 1825.

The "corrupt bargain" charge had been advanced during the first year of Adams' Presidency, and in the fall of 1825, the news of Jackson's nomination by the Tennessee legislature attracted attention in Ohio. One local writer denounced Jackson's attitude as one which regarded the Presidency as "his birthright, of which, like Esau," he had been deprived.⁴⁵ In December, an Administration congressman wrote, with some anxiety, "We cannot tell what will be the State of the parties under Mr. Adams' administration but I have no doubt but some great effort is maturing to revolutionize the country in order that certain aspiring men may rule who are in the background and must remain there unless they take the front rank by some great commotion.

"You must not be surprised if the disaffected of all parties unite with the Jacksonites to bring about this state of things and assume the name of the People's party."⁴⁶

By 1827 the great effort "to revolutionize the country" for the Jackson cause was well under way. It had been the custom to celebrate Jackson Day in the principal towns of the West with a ball. In 1827, in Cincinnati and Steubenville added features of the day were a procession through the streets and a special meeting with an

⁴⁴ F. P. Weisenburger, *John McLean*, 62-3.

⁴⁵ "Warren," in *Ohio State Journal*, Dec. 1, 1825.

⁴⁶ Whittlesey to Joshua R. Giddings, Washington, Dec. 24, 1825, Giddings MSS.

address in one of the larger halls of the city. In Cincinnati a select committee issued a circular, calling on Jackson's friends in each county to appoint a committee of correspondence, and this proposal was acted upon in various parts of the State.⁴⁷

The Administration men were also on the alert. Wright, prominent congressman from Steubenville, had written during the previous fall that there ought to be "a central committee of *judicious* and confidential men" from various parts of the State to meet once a year, and one or more persons in each county to gather information as observers of the local political situation. In March, 1827, a circular issued from Washington contained an impressive list of leading friends of the Administration through whom communications might be safely carried on. Throughout the year, Administration meetings were held to endorse the policies of Adams and Clay and to prepare for the fall elections. Some of the Administration leaders were quite sanguine as to the party's prospects in Ohio. Daniel Webster, for example, wrote in February, 1827: "From the West, information is various and opinions as to future events there, quite different. Ohio is fixed in her course, but a great contest is expected in Kentucky"; and Clay expressed his confidence in the West a few months later as he prophesied that there would be no loss in that quarter."⁴⁸ Charles Hammond of the Cincinnati *Gazette*, however, was not so optimistic. He wrote: "I had thought in political affairs I could be surprised at nothing. But the events of the last four months have filled me with both surprise and sorrow. The combination which has been formed against the administration, the parties that compose it, its principles of action, and the men who seem prepared to unite with it, taken all together, present an extraordinary spectacle. And one well calculated to excite alarm for our future destiny as a people."⁴⁹

The Jacksonians were clearly on the offensive. From Ports-

⁴⁷ H. C. Webster, "History of Democratic Party Organization in the Northwest," *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, XXIV (1915), 16-7.

⁴⁸ Daniel Webster to William Plumer, Jr., Washington, Feb. 11, 1827; Clay to Webster, Washington, April 20, 1827, Webster MSS. (in Library of Congress).

⁴⁹ Charles Hammond to Clay, Cincinnati, Mar. 28, 1827, Clay MSS.

mouth an Administration supporter reported: "The Jackson people are few in number, but what they lack in number, is made up in noise and bustle." A young lawyer had been sent from Cincinnati to aid Robert Lucas in the organization of the party, and he was active in sending contributions to the local press. Prominent individuals who had been favorable to the Administration came out for Jackson, and the Administration leaders seemed unable to stem the rising tide of opposition. The Jacksonians attempted to make the fall elections a test of their strength, but after the elections were over, Nathaniel McLean, writing to his brother, the postmaster-general, said that in about half of the counties the Presidential question had not been made a test, but that where the issue was raised Jackson generally won. He predicted an increase in Jackson strength during the next year, equal to that made in 1826-1827, and sufficient to give the Jacksonians control of the legislature; but he realized that the Administration had the advantage in the support it received from veteran members of the legislature.⁵⁰ Although the Jacksonians made distinct gains in the election of 1827 in Ohio, the Administration party retained a large majority in each house. There were twenty-two Administration senators to thirteen Jacksonians and forty-four Administration representatives to twenty-eight Jacksonians, with one in each house still uncommitted.

The friends of the Administration frankly admitted that the Jacksonians had the better organization. In Hamilton County the Jacksonian ticket had been drawn up early in September. The Administration group, meeting later, decided not to offer a party ticket, partly because they believed that the members would not easily submit to discipline. In the Columbus district, where a congressman was to be chosen to succeed William Wilson, deceased, three names, finally reduced to two, had been presented to the followers of the Administration. Consequently, William Stanbery, the Jackson candidate, was able to win in the election, though he polled only 4,065 votes in the district to 5,391 for the two support-

⁵⁰ Nathaniel McLean to John McLean, Columbus, Oct. 26, 1827, McLean MSS.

ers of the Administration. Little wonder that Clay declared that "the same want of organization" which he knew to exist in New York was found also in Ohio.⁵¹

Two features of Democratic organization became prominent in Ohio during 1828, the holding of congressional district conventions and the extension of township meetings and township committees. In some cases, party organization was even extended to school districts.

One of the reasons for Jackson's increasing strength in Ohio was the ability with which he was defended against the charges of his political opponents. He was described as a mere military man, wholly devoid of civil qualifications. It was charged that he had already been too long in the government pay; that he had been associated with the Aaron Burr conspiracy; that he had executed six militiamen without authority in 1814; had killed Charles Dickinson in a duel; and had favored the exclusion from the Tennessee legislature of non-property holders. Hammond of the *Cincinnati Gazette* was especially unscrupulous in attempting to air the early relations between General and Mrs. Jackson, even publishing a paper known as *Truth's Advocate* in order to discuss the question exhaustively. To all of these charges the Jacksonians replied with zeal. On their own account they showed great versatility in their attempts to discredit Adams, whom they branded "a notorious aristocrat," an "ultra federalist," a "high-flying aristocrat," and a Unitarian unfit to preside over the affairs of a Christian people. They criticized the reference to colleges but not to common schools in his first annual message; they charged that public funds had been spent on a billiard table for the White House; and in season and out they shouted "corrupt bargain." Clay, moreover, was severely criticized, especially for his challenging of John Randolph to the famous duel. Administration newspapers in Ohio made spirited rejoinders, but the charges did great harm to their cause.

The fact that money had been spent on a billiard table for the

⁵¹ Clay to Webster, Washington, Nov. 8, 1827, Webster MSS.

White House aroused the pioneers of the Ohio countryside to a high pitch of indignation. A prominent Ohio congressman wrote to the postmaster-general: "The table seems a small matter for reproach, but I can assert that there is scarcely an act he could have done which will prejudice him more," and the postmaster at Cincinnati reported to his chief in Washington that "the moral and religious" part of the community objected to the billiard table and felt that even if the President's son were responsible, the sinful piece of White House equipment should be removed.⁵² Later an Ohio congressman wrote: "When I saw the billiard table charge in Mr. Adams' account, I told Mr. Everett, before I knew the sentiment of a human being, that it would make thousands of Jacksonians. He was incredulous. That charge has made tens of thousands."⁵³

The "corrupt bargain" accusation was, of course, especially damaging. The charge was never definitely proved, and by 1828 Adams-Clay newspapers were declaring that it was "no longer necessary to refute the stale charges of bargain and sale" since they had been disproved by "conclusive and satisfactory testimony" which "convicted Jackson before the world, of preferring malicious charges of corrupt bargain against Clay, which he was unable to substantiate." Yet, irreparable damage had been done to the Administration. The "bargain and sale" outcry had kept the opposition alive until it could be organized on an effective basis. During these years the questions of internal improvements and a protective tariff, bound together in the so-called American System, were rather universally favored by Ohioans. Since 1824, when the Ohio delegation in Congress had voted unanimously in favor of the tariff law, newspapers and candidates of differing political allegiances in Ohio had faithfully supported the American System. In 1828 remarkable political strategy was devised to prove the friendliness of both the Administration and the Jacksonian party

⁵² John W. Campbell to John McLean, West Union, June 29, 1826; William Burke to *id.*, Cincinnati, July 17, 1826, McLean MSS.

⁵³ Whittlesey to Webster, Canfield, Ohio, June 23, 1831, Webster MSS.

toward internal improvements. Each group attempted, through its representatives in Congress, to secure a liberal grant to aid Ohio in its canal program. Apparently the Jackson members succeeded in launching their bill first and in insuring it prior consideration by the committee. But John Woods, an Administration congressman from Ohio and a member of the House Committee on Roads and Canals, was able to report the Administration measure, providing for a grant of 500,000 acres, first. When the measure was passed the Jackson measure seemed unnecessary. In the Senate, however, the Jacksonians secured the incorporation of their bill as an amendment to the Administration measure, and in this form it became a law. Thus, Ohio received a double grant of public lands, each party claiming the credit.⁵⁴

On the tariff question both Jacksonians and Administration men in Ohio wanted to be known as the friends of protection. Consequently, when the woolens bill of 1827 was up for consideration in Congress, some Jacksonians in Ohio objected to the terms of the bill, while protesting a belief in the efficacy of a protectionist program. Moses Dawson, through his *Cincinnati Advertiser*, pointed out that the bill was conceived "in order to fix upon those who were opposed to it the opprobrium of the people as being enemies to domestic industry, when on the contrary, it was opposed on the grounds of its being calculated to encourage smuggling, to prohibit the importation of goods of prime necessity for the poorer classes, or to make the poor pay a greater proportion of the tax than the rich." A similar attitude was taken by other Jackson papers in Ohio.⁵⁵

When the bill passed the House every Ohioan voted for it except John Thompson of the Chillicothe district, who opposed the bill in every stage. He and other Jacksonian congressmen outside the State were charged with contributing to the defeat of a protectionist measure, when the bill was lost in the Senate by the deciding

⁵⁴ *House Journal*, 20 Cong., 1 Sess., 188-9, 777-8, 779-80, 790-2, 863; *Senate Journal*, 20 Cong., 1 Sess., 441, 470, 492.

⁵⁵ *Cincinnati Gazette*, April 6, 1827; *Hamilton (Ohio) Advertiser*, May 11, 18, 1827.

vote of the Vice-President. Charles Hammond, the well-known Administration editor lamented, in a letter to Henry Clay: "The efforts made in the West to misrepresent the Woolen Bill show how many are ready to abandon their former professions of principle in favor of the Hero. This is a ticklish subject in Ohio, and is touched only by those whose violence prostrates all discretion."⁵⁶

Maneuvering upon the tariff question continued during the year. Ohio Jacksonians attempted to prevent satisfactory representation of Ohioans at the Harrisburg convention which sought to bring pressure upon Congress for higher protection, and delegates were nominated in Cincinnati only after two unsuccessful attempts. Other delegates were chosen at a meeting in Columbus. Jackson editors complained that the leaders of the Harrisburg meeting wished to recommend measures which the supporters of Jackson would have to oppose, but Hammond retorted that he doubted "whether a convention could be got up by any set of men, or under any set of circumstances" at that time expressly to promote the interests of the American System, that would meet the approbation of the Jacksonians.⁵⁷ Eight delegates from Ohio actually attended the Harrisburg convention. When Jacksonians attempted to divert attention to increased protection for other articles than wools, United States Senator William Henry Harrison, speaking in Cincinnati, declared that such a policy would give "the death blow to every prospect of obtaining relief for the western farmer," and accused western Jacksonians of indirectly opposing the wools program "in order to elect a president of the United States."⁵⁸

The tariff question continued to be important in 1828. The issue proved dangerous to the Jacksonian cause. In April, the Cincinnati *Gazette* declared that there was no reasonable hope for a proper revision of the tariff because the Jacksonians had joined "the southern corps." When the Rollin C. Mallary amendment—

⁵⁶ Hammond to Clay, Cincinnati, March 28, 1827, Clay MSS.

⁵⁷ Cincinnati *Gazette*, June 22, July 16, 17, 21, 1827; Cincinnati *National Republican*, July 20, 1827.

⁵⁸ Cincinnati *Gazette*, July 13, 16, 1827; *Ohio State Journal*, Dec. 6, 1827.

aimed at greater protection for wool and woolen goods—was voted on, two of the three Jacksonians in Congress from Ohio voted against it, Stanbery insisting that Ohio had nothing to gain from increased protection to woolen manufactures. In its final form, however, the tariff bill of 1828, was apparently satisfactory to Ohioans, for Ohio's senators and every Ohio representative cast his vote for it except Mordecai Bartley, an Administration member, who was absent.⁵⁹ Nevertheless, Administration newspapers contended that the Jacksonians were politically allied with antitariff groups in the South that were hostile to the interests of Ohio and that Jackson's followers in the State were being deceived in supporting a man whose election would mean the overthrow of the American System. Both parties in Ohio continued to claim that they were the real friends of protection, and the Jacksonians generally ignored antitariff developments among their friends in the South.⁶⁰

In the meantime, the policy of the Adams Administration in its distribution of the patronage had not added to its strength in the State. It was difficult to satisfy those who had formerly been Adams men and those who had followed Clay in 1824. Former Governor Thomas Worthington, an Adams supporter in 1824, reflected the old hostile feeling when he declared that if Adams followed Clay's lead a revolution would follow in the political sentiment of the State.⁶¹ The first appointment to a diplomatic position ever given to a citizen of Ohio was tendered in 1826 to James Cooley of Urbana, who became *chargé d'affaires* to Peru. He was a graduate of Yale, several times a member of the Ohio legislature, and had been a Clay elector in 1824. But Worthington called the appointment "a wretched" one, a "poor sop thrown to Ohio." Hammond found that some expressed "surprise, none commendation" and asserted that an agreement between Clay and Vance, congressman from the

⁵⁹ *Senate Journal*, 20 Cong., 1 Sess., 410; *House Journal*, 20 Cong., 1 Sess., 607-8.

⁶⁰ Cleveland *Herald*, July 18, 1828; Portsmouth (Ohio) *Western Times*, June 28, 1828.

⁶¹ To John McLean, Chillicothe, June 1, 1826, McLean MSS.

Urbana district, to keep Cooley from standing in the latter's way at the fall election, was the real explanation for the appointment.⁶²

The chief position in the National Government held by an Ohioan at this time was that of postmaster-general. John McLean, who had been continued in the position from the Monroe Administration, was in a place of vantage to strengthen greatly the Administration party in the State. But as a former supporter of John C. Calhoun, he felt no real devotion to the party in power. It is possible that he hoped, by administering appointments in a seemingly impartial way, to retain the esteem of the Adams men and to secure the support of the Jacksonians, thus paving the way for his own election to the Presidency.

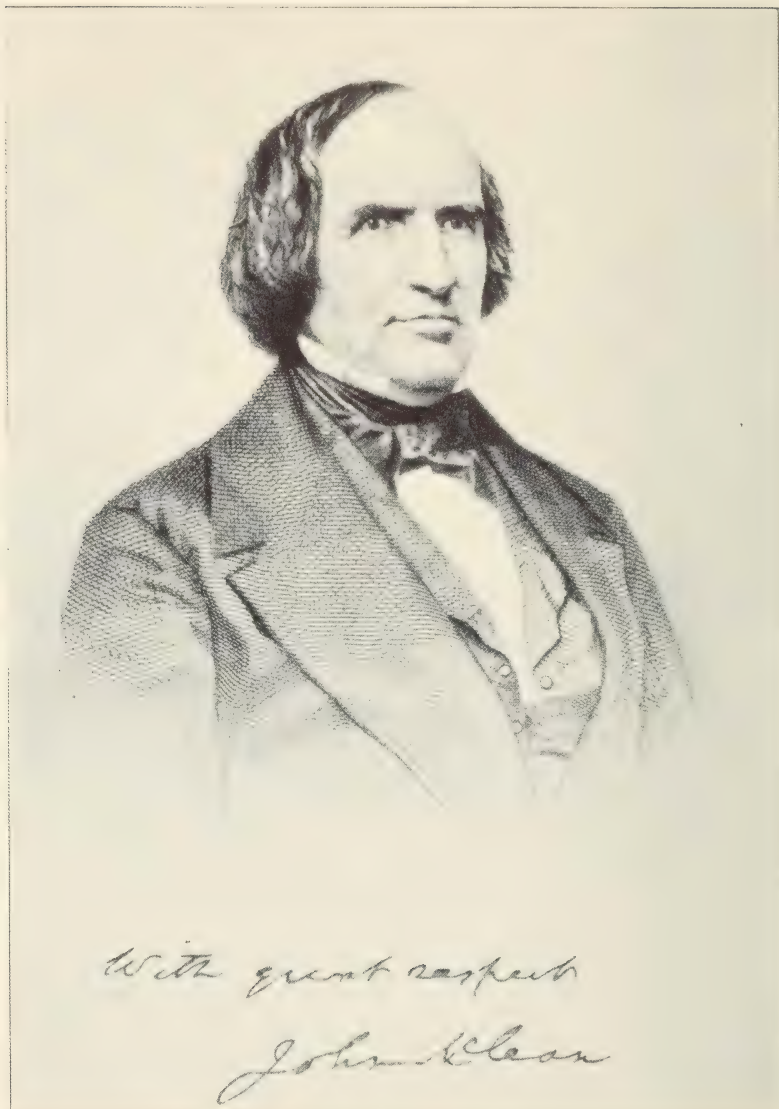
At any rate, McLean retained William Burke, who privately admitted his enthusiasm for the Jackson cause, as postmaster at Cincinnati, the most important city in the West. Similar instances aroused great resentment among Administration leaders in Ohio, but the postmaster-general proved extremely adroit in justifying his policies, and there were strong reasons for not removing him.⁶³

The Ohio elections for Congress and State officials in October, 1828, showed mixed results. The three Jacksonian congressmen were reelected, and in five other districts Administration members were replaced by followers of the "Hero of New Orleans." In the contest for the governorship, however, many Jacksonians were satisfied with Trimble's record, and he was reelected over John W. Campbell, a Jacksonian, by a vote of 53,971 to 51,951. Adams-Clay supporters also won control of the next Ohio legislature.

To encourage their supporters to greater efforts in the Presidential contest later in October, Ohio Jacksonians carried on a vigorous campaign. The vote of the State was 67,597 for Jackson to 63,396 for Adams, and over twice as many votes were cast as in any previous year. Adams carried all of the Western Reserve and a

⁶² Cincinnati *Gazette*, Apr. 25, May 16, 1826; Burke to John McLean, Cincinnati, July 17, 1826, McLean MSS.

⁶³ F. P. Weisenburger, *John McLean*, 48-65.



27. JOHN McLEAN (1785-1861)

United States postmaster-general and first Supreme Court justice from Ohio.
From F. P. Weisenburger, *Life of John McLean* (Columbus, 1937), frontispiece.

group of counties west of it, making a solid stretch of Adams territory in the extreme northern part of the State, from the Pennsylvania to the Indiana line. He also carried a large part of the upper Miami Valley (securing nine counties in that vicinity), six contiguous counties along the Ohio River (Scioto to Washington inclusive) in the southeastern part of the State, and Delaware, Franklin, Ross, and Muskingum counties in the interior.⁶⁴ Thus, the extreme northern part of the State (including the Western Reserve), strongly for Adams or Clay in 1824, was practically untouched by Jacksonism in 1828. A group of counties along the Ohio in the southeastern part of the State, and Delaware in the central part, continued their allegiance to Adams, as in 1824. Other central Ohio counties like most counties in the upper Miami Valley had been devoted to Clay and now supported Adams. But elsewhere the former Clay strength did not contribute much to Adams' following, and the results in the Scioto Valley, formerly a Clay stronghold, were most disappointing to Administration leaders.⁶⁵

Jackson in 1828, carried every Ohio county which he had won in the three-cornered contest four years before, except one (Warren), and added a long list of new conquests. The reasons for such a political revolution have already been noted. Jackson was a westerner, a military hero, who, many believed, had been robbed of the Presidency in 1825. A powerful organization built up by those who sought political preferment, pressed the charges against Clay and Adams, and valiantly defended their own candidate. The failure of the postmaster-general to assist the Administration in Ohio caused disaffection in the ranks of that party and contributed to the growth of Jacksonian newspaper support within the State. One Ohio congressman wrote:

" . . . Office seekers and the discontents of every party united on him [Jackson]. It is a remarkable fact, that so soon as a man became soured towards his neighbor, or towards his family,

⁶⁴ *St. Clairsville Gazette*, Nov. 22, 1828; *Cleveland Herald*, Nov. 27, 1828.

⁶⁵ Vance to Duncan McArthur, Urbana, Nov. 9, 1828, McArthur MSS.

or towards his brethren in the church, he was sure to support General Jackson, the better to satisfy his revenge."⁶⁶

The defeat of Adams in Ohio was not due to any failure on the part of his supporters to vote, but rather to the wholly unexpected Jackson strength. The rank and file of the people could feel no enthusiasm for the efforts of administration leaders to secure an appropriation by Congress, even though perhaps legally justified, of \$80,000 for Duncan McArthur, whose claim had become a party question. The Germans and Scotch-Irish farmers, arriving in numbers from Pennsylvania during the preceding decade, joined the "tenantry in Ohio" against the "Landlords" by voting for Jackson, whose election, they believed, would mean that "Col. Benton's plan would succeed and each get a quarter section of land."⁶⁷ The result of the election was described by the organ of the victorious party at the State capital as an "unparalleled triumph of the people. Our country has covered herself with glory, as lasting as the verdure of the laurels that crown the head of her illustrious hero. The coalition are more than 'electrified.' They are forever dissolved."⁶⁸

But a prominent Adams supporter felt otherwise as he lamented, "If the Gov. of republics shall have decreed that ours shall march in the train of those that are departed and gone, we must bow to his will."⁶⁹

Nevertheless, the Adams-Clay men still controlled the State legislature and so they could choose the United States senator to succeed William Henry Harrison who had resigned to become minister to Colombia. Jeremiah Morrow, John Sloane, and John C. Wright coveted the place, but the latter two were from the wrong section of the State. It was then the practise to have one Senator from eastern and one from western Ohio. Both Jacob Burnet, anti-Jacksonian, and John W. Campbell, the defeated Jackson candi-

⁶⁶ Whittlesey to Clay, Canfield, O., Sept. 4, 1829, Clay MSS.

⁶⁷ John McDonald to Duncan McArthur, Hermitage, March 25, 1827, McArthur MSS.; T. L. Hinde to Clay, Newport, Feb. 3, 1829, Clay MSS.

⁶⁸ Columbus *Ohio Monitor*, Nov. 12, 1828.

⁶⁹ Sloane to Duncan McArthur, Wooster, Nov. 1, 1828, McArthur MSS.

date for governor and the favorite senatorial candidate of that party, were from the western part of the State. The final vote gave Burnet, 56; Campbell, 50; Morrow 1; and Robert Harper 1. Thus, Burnet, an early pioneer lawyer of Cincinnati and a rather grim, successful business man, who had served as judge of the Ohio Supreme Court, was sent to the United States Senate.⁷⁰

RANKINGS OF THE POPULAR VOTE BY CONGRESSIONAL
DISTRICTS IN THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION OF 1824⁷¹

<i>District</i>	<i>Clay</i>	<i>Jackson</i>	<i>Adams</i>
1	3	1	2
2	2	1	3
3	1	2	3
4	1	3	2
5	2	1	3
6	1	2	3
7	1	3	2
8	1	3	2
9	1	2	3
10	1	2	3
11	2	1	3
12	2	1	3
13	2	3	1
14	1	3	2

⁷⁰ Cleveland *Herald*, Dec. 18, 1828.

⁷¹ This table was compiled from John Kilbourn, *Ohio Gazetteer* (Columbus, 1831), 17; *Niles' National Register* (Baltimore), XXVII (1824/5), 196-7; Cleveland *Herald*, Jan. 27, 1825.

CHAPTER IX

The Jacksonians at the Helm

THE advent to power of the new Federal administration was impressed upon the people of Ohio by the arrival of Andrew Jackson within their boundaries en route to Washington. But the recent death of his beloved wife left him in no mood for public demonstrations. He consented to land at Cincinnati, where a crowd had gone down-stream to meet him as he came up the Ohio, and where guns were fired upon his approach. Crowds thronged the Cincinnati Hotel and the Broadway Hotel to shake his hand. When he left he was escorted by a river boat loaded with admirers as far as Maysville and by a local committee to Pittsburgh.¹

It seemed reasonable to assume that Ohio would be represented in the cabinet of the Administration, for John McLean apparently was to be retained as postmaster-general (then, for the first time, made an office of cabinet rank) or be appointed to some other department. After much political maneuvering, however, he was sent to the United States Supreme Court as the first justice from the Old Northwest.²

The question of removals from public office spread great expectations and much consternation in Ohio. One anti-Jacksonian editor predicted that, under the advice of "such prompters and advisers" as would surround Jackson, the most hideous and unrelenting type of party spirit would prevail. Samuel F. Vinton, anti-Jackson congressman, declared that a committee composed of Elijah Hayward of Cincinnati, John Hamm of Zanesville, and "all their gang," counseled the general in regard to Ohio affairs, and that others were ready and eager with suggestions.³ The Jack-

¹ Cincinnati Gazette, Jan. 27, 29, 1829.

² F. P. Weisenburger, *Life of John McLean* (Columbus, 1937), 66-8.

³ S. F. Vinton to Duncan McArthur, Washington, Feb. 27, 1829, McArthur MSS.

son press in Ohio justified removals with varying degrees of frankness. According to one newspaper, the hold-overs from previous administrations were those against whom the voice of the Nation had "pronounced a judgment of condemnation," and it was only to be feared that change would "not be so universal as it should be."⁴ Men who had served a quarter century or more should be removed, the article continued, for "whoever does not know that possession of office gives the holder an influence to establish an aristocratic circle in his neighborhood, as strong as the genius of our government will admit, is a poor observer of the politics of his own country." Another Jackson paper with less candor insisted that removal was only for cause, and that no persons were dismissed except those who had "disgraced their offices, either by negligence in their official duties—a want of responsibility or a violent and uncompromising hostility to republican principles."⁵

One of the first persons removed was Ohio's only citizen who was then a representative in a foreign country, William Henry Harrison, minister to Colombia. One reason for his recall was the desire to accommodate a Jackson leader from Kentucky, Thomas P. Moore, who wished to regain his health and fortune and whose consent had to be secured for the nomination of William T. Barry as postmaster-general. Joel Buttles, postmaster at Columbus since the establishment of the office at that place, and the postmasters at Circleville, Chillicothe, Marietta, Portsmouth, Salem, Warren, and many other towns were removed by the end of the year. Anti-Jacksonians objected in particular to the removal of the postmaster at Urbana who had been appointed by James Monroe and whose successor had, it was asserted, come so recently from New Jersey that he had not acquired the right to vote in Ohio. Other officials removed during the first months of the new Administration included the district attorney, the surveyor-general, the marshal of Ohio; the Indian agent at Piqua; the receivers of public monies at Chillicothe, at Cincinnati, and at Marietta; and the regis-

⁴ Columbus *Ohio Monitor*, April 8, 1829.

⁵ St. Clairsville (Ohio) *Gazette*, June 13, 1829.

ters of the land-offices at Wooster, at Tiffin, and at Zanesville.⁶

Particular reasons for some of the new appointments were quite apparent. Isaiah Ingham, the new receiver of public monies at the land-office in Chillicothe, was a brother of the secretary of the treasury. John Patterson, new Federal marshal, was an editorial writer for a Jacksonian paper at Steubenville. The editor of the *Marietta Pilot* was made postmaster at that place; James B. Gardiner, previously editor of the *Ohio People's Press*, was nominated register of the land-office at Tiffin; Elijah Hayward of the *Cincinnati National Republican* became examiner of land-offices; and Moses Dawson, editor of the *Cincinnati Advertiser*, was nominated receiver of public monies at the land-office in Cincinnati.⁷ Newspapers as well as editors shared in the spoils of office. In Columbus the advertising of dead letters was taken from the *Ohio State Journal* and given to the *Ohio Monitor*, as was the publication of the laws of the United States, although the former paper had six times the circulation of the latter. Similar changes took place in other parts of the State.⁸

The conferring of official positions to pay political debts, however, was not without its obstacles. The nomination of Gardiner (who, according to McLean, was usually drunk) as register of the land-office at Tiffin was unanimously rejected by the Senate. He was later made special agent in the work of moving certain Ohio Indians west of the Mississippi. When Moses Dawson's name was presented to the Senate for the position of collector at Cincinnati, attempts were made to prove that his naturalization papers had been fraudulently obtained, and the nomination was rejected. Morgan Neville, who had done some work for the Jacksonian cause and who proved to be a constant office-seeker, was then appointed.⁹ Former Governor Ethan Allen Brown of Cincinnati and John

⁶ Columbus *Ohio State Journal*, May 28, June 4, Oct. 1, 1829; Cincinnati *Gazette*, May 1, 2, 25, 1829.

⁷ *Ohio Monitor*, May 27, 1829; *Ohio State Journal*, May 28, 1829; Hamilton (Ohio) *Intelligencer*, June 9, 1829.

⁸ Cleveland *Herald*, Jan. 14, 1830.

⁹ *Senate Journal*, 21 Cong., 1 Sess., 459, 432; John McLean to Duff Green, Sept. 19, 1829, McLean MSS.

Hamm of Zanesville were appointed as *chargé d'affaires* to Brazil and Chile respectively. In Ohio, as elsewhere, removals to make room for new appointments, were not so rapid nor so numerous as had sometimes been supposed. The postmaster at Dayton wrote that clamor for his removal which had been going on for six months had thus far been unsuccessful. His friends among the Jacksonians pleaded that he was in ill health and that he and his family were dependent upon the position.¹⁰ In one case a recently removed postmaster was ordered reinstated, the new appointee being considered as having declined the office, since the old postmaster was popular and had not been charged with "any want of integrity or punctuality."¹¹

Party lines in local elections hitherto had not been closely drawn, but during 1829 the Jacksonians endeavored to achieve such a division and urged the holding of county conventions and township meetings. As the State elections approached, such Jacksonian methods of organization proved their efficiency. Even in important counties like Hamilton, Butler, and Jefferson the opposition did not so much as nominate candidates for the legislature. Robert Lucas, a Jacksonian, was elected to the State Senate because of the "childish obstinacy" of two anti-Jacksonians in failing to reach a compromise. With a majority of about six in each house as a result of the elections, the Jacksonians chose Lucas (of Pike County) as presiding officer of the Senate and Thomas L. Hamer (of Brown County) for the similar position in the House.¹² Early in 1830, after much factional maneuvering Elijah Hayward of Cincinnati and John Goodenow of Steubenville, both Jacksonians, were chosen by the legislature to positions on the State Supreme Court. When the latter resigned because of eye trouble, his place was taken by Colonel Henry Brush of Chillicothe.¹³

¹⁰ George S. Houston to McLean, Dayton, Aug. 5, 1829, McLean MSS.; *id.* to Henry Clay, Dayton, Oct. 31, 1829, Clay MSS.

¹¹ *Ohio State Journal*, Oct. 22, 1829.

¹² Portsmouth (Ohio) *Western Times*, Oct. 24, 1829; Columbus *Ohio State Bulletin*, Nov. 11, Dec. 10, 1829.

¹³ *Ibid.*, Feb. 1, 1830; Hamilton *Intelligencer*, June 1, 1830.

During the same year, much political feeling developed in Ohio over the Maysville Road bill, under the terms of which the Federal Government would have subscribed to stock in a road from Maysville to Lexington, Kentucky. Ohioans generally looked upon opposition to internal improvements as political heresy, and in both houses of Congress their senators and representatives supported the proposal. When it was rumored in Washington that Jackson would veto the measure, one Ohio congressman refused to believe the report. After Jackson actually vetoed the bill, James Shields was the only congressman from Ohio who changed his position and voted against overriding the Presidential veto.¹⁴ The Jacksonian press in Ohio defended the veto, elaborating upon the arguments used in the Presidential message. Anti-Jackson papers declared that Jackson had "thrown off his mask, and shown himself in his true colors" and that it was now clear that there was no "more fatal delusion" than that Jackson favored "Internal Improvements and the Domestic Industry of the Country." Ohioans were invited to choose between unbridled devotion to Jackson and the true interests of the West.¹⁵

Jackson had touched a vital nerve in the political situation in Ohio. Duff Green, well-known Washington editor, wrote that the veto would "produce alarm and perhaps loss," and James Buchanan declared that it would injure the President's popularity in Ohio and "throughout the western states generally."¹⁶ Probably the desire to placate feeling in regard to the veto accounted for Jackson's stopping at Cincinnati a few weeks later on a trip to the Choctaw Indians. A committee of nineteen from the city went one hundred and thirty-five miles up the Ohio to escort the President to the city. General William Lytle, chairman of the delegation, welcomed the President with assurances that the measures of the Administration and especially the Maysville Road veto message, were

¹⁴ *House Journal*, 21 Cong., 1 Sess., 587, 763; *Senate Journal*, 21 Cong., 1 Sess., 507; William Creighton, Jr., to Duncan McArthur, May 22, 1830, McArthur MSS.

¹⁵ *Hamilton Intelligencer*, June 29, 1830.

¹⁶ Green to McLean, Washington, June 26, 1830; James Buchanan to *id.*, Lancaster, Pa., June 9, 1830, McLean MSS.

cordially approved. "Although a few men have made your veto on the Maysville turnpike bill a pretence for leaving our ranks," Lytle explained, "we are convinced that our real strength has been increased rather than diminished by that document."¹⁷ Upon arriving in Cincinnati Jackson spent an hour in receiving the public at the "Bazaar" and then proceeded to Lytle's home where the evening was spent with "the ladies and gentlemen" of the city. The next day he visited the line of the canal, received additional visitors, and reviewed a battalion of militia. The tremendous personal popularity of the President overcame developing dissatisfaction, and one Jacksonian editor gleefully exclaimed, "What now will be said of his veto? Who now will proclaim the down fall of General Jackson in the West?" Soon Dawson was writing to Jackson that the veto message had actually made party converts in central and northern Ohio.¹⁸

Doubtless the Jacksonians were aided by the fact that the enthusiasm for Federal internal improvements had probably passed its crest in Ohio, which was constructing a system of canals between the Great Lakes and the Ohio River on its own account and at burdensome expense. Hence, Ohio may not have been so keenly interested in appropriations by the Federal Government as formerly. Certain sections of Ohio, like the vicinity of Steubenville and the north central region from Delaware to the Lake, moreover, were not benefited by the canal system, and this fact may have embittered them against internal improvements in general. At any rate, the *Sandusky Clarion*, although an anti-Jackson paper, rejoiced at the veto, while a meeting at Steubenville in June, strongly expressed its opposition to the State canal policy and in particular to the extension of the Miami Canal.¹⁹

In July a Democratic State convention, which was rather sparsely attended, met at Columbus and nominated Robert Lucas of Pike-ton for the governorship. Among the anti-Jacksonians, William

¹⁷ *Ohio State Bulletin*, July 7, 1830.

¹⁸ Moses Dawson to Andrew Jackson, Cincinnati, July 5, 1830, Jackson MSS. (in Library of Congress).

¹⁹ *Delaware Ohio State Gazette and Delaware County Journal*, June 19, 1830.

Henry Harrison's name was suggested, but he declined to allow his name to be considered. A group of revolutionary soldiers wrote to Duncan McArthur on July 23 that they had mingled with the populace at the meeting of the Federal court in Columbus and had found him the favorite for governor. McArthur replied that he would esteem it a great honor to be elected but would oppose no one "who may have the same views with regard to the policy of the country."²⁰ The name of Calvin Pease of Trumbull County had already been widely mentioned for the post, but apparently he doubted the wisdom of supporting Henry Clay for the Presidency, and this attitude lessened enthusiasm for him in some anti-Jacksonian circles. Pease, however, had a strong following in the Western Reserve, and his friends did not wish to withdraw his name.²¹ McArthur could hardly expect to succeed with Pease in the field; but the latter's ambitions ran along judicial rather than executive lines, and McArthur definitely became the party candidate by resigning from the State Senate in time for his successor to be chosen at the October elections.²²

In August Thomas Ewing wrote that the "Jackson fever" was subsiding in the State, but the political situation was, in reality, a very uncertain one. Samuel F. Vinton, congressman from the Gallipolis district, thought that he had "never seen so much apathy and indeed total indifference," and was at a loss to know whether it was "an omen for good or for evil." The Maysville veto continued to be a matter for discussion, but every Ohio congressman, Jacksonian and anti-Jacksonian, except one, had voted to override the Presidential veto, hence the issue in the congressional elections was far from clear.²³ Nevertheless, the Maysville veto weakened the Jacksonian cause in Ohio. In the Cincinnati congressional district,

²⁰ St. Clairsville (Ohio) *National Historian*, Aug. 7, 1830; Four Revolutionary Soldiers to Duncan McArthur, July 23, 1830, McArthur MSS.; *Ohio State Gazette*, Aug. 5, 1830.

²¹ Thomas McArthur to Duncan McArthur, Fruithill, Aug. 14, 1830; Gustavus Swan to *id.*, Norwalk, Aug. 17, 1830, McArthur MSS.

²² Samson Mason to *id.*, Springfield, Sept. 23, 1830, *ibid.*; Calvin Pease to Thomas Ewing, Warren, Nov. 28, 1830, Ewing MSS.

²³ Vinton to Duncan McArthur, Gallipolis, Oct. 10, 1830, McArthur MSS.

James Findlay (Jacksonian) received about four hundred fewer votes in Hamilton County alone than he had received in 1828 while his opponent received about three hundred and sixty more than in 1828 in that county. Findlay was reelected, the press declaring that his lessened popularity was due to his support of Jackson's bill for the removal of the Indians in Georgia and to his too great conformity to the executive will, to his support of the Maysville bill after its veto, and to a trading of votes between his opponent and the successful local candidate for sheriff.²⁴

In the Lebanon congressional district, James Shields, who had voted for the Indian bill and who alone among the Ohioans in Congress had voted against overriding Jackson's veto of the Maysville Road bill, was defeated for reelection by Thomas Corwin.²⁵ William Russell of West Union had his party loyalty challenged because of his failure to "go the whole hog" in opposing the Maysville Road. He was censured by a meeting of Brown County Democrats at Georgetown but he was, nevertheless, reelected.²⁶ In the Columbus district, William Stanbery who had supported Jackson as a friend of internal improvements, sought reelection to Congress. As late as April, 1830, Stanbery had written that Jackson "was recommended to us expressly on the ground, that he was in favor of the Tariff and of Internal Improvements" and that no reason existed for believing that he had changed his opinions. Stanbery subsequently expressed disapproval of the Maysville veto and was in turn denounced by the Jacksonians of Licking County, meeting at Newark. A Jackson paper at Columbus declared that he had "reckoned without his district in his puerile attempt to array the democracy of his district against the President and his administration," and that he had "been weighed in the balance and found wanting."²⁷ Hence, at the Democratic district convention at Mt. Vernon Nathaniel McLean, brother of the Supreme Court justice,

²⁴ *Cincinnati Gazette*, Oct. 28, 1830; *Cincinnati Advertiser*, Nov. 17, 1830.

²⁵ *Hamilton Intelligencer*, Nov. 2, 1830.

²⁶ *Ohio State Journal*, Aug. 19, Dec. 18, 1830.

²⁷ *Cincinnati Gazette*, May 31, 1830; *Ohio State Journal*, June 17, 1830; *Ohio State Bulletin*, July 7, 1830.

was nominated for Congress, and the Maysville veto was specifically endorsed. Stanbery, however, insisted on running, and he was endorsed by a meeting of anti-Jacksonians at Delaware. The previously announced anti-Jackson candidate withdrew; Stanbery received support from the opposition newspapers and was re-elected by over seven hundred votes.²⁸

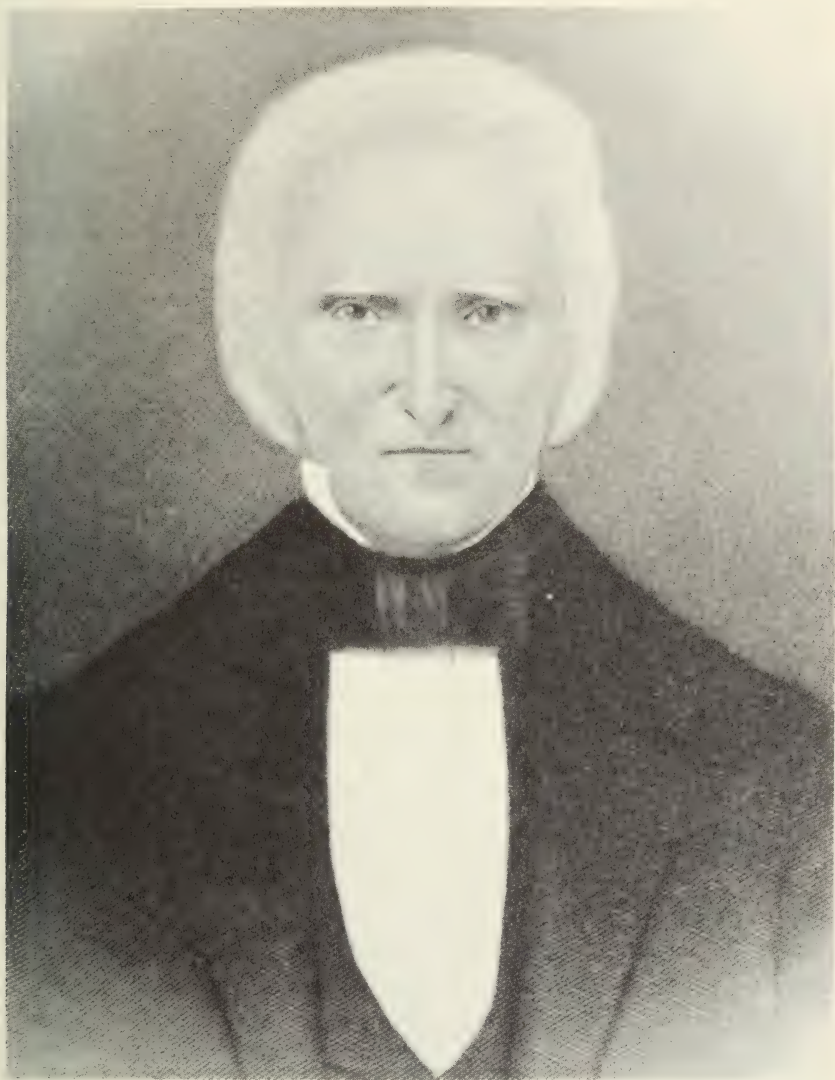
In the Ohio legislature the race was extremely close in 1830, eighteen Jackson and eighteen anti-Jackson men (one of the latter, David F. Heaton of Preble County, being somewhat doubtful) having been chosen to the Senate and thirty-eight anti-Jackson to thirty-four Jackson men in the House. In the Senate a tie vote for speaker was finally broken by the election of a moderate Jackson partisan, and anti-Jackson officers were easily selected in the House.

Both candidates for the governorship, Robert Lucas and Duncan McArthur, had had long experience in public life. Each had become a major-general and had served creditably in the War of 1812; each, moreover, had served fourteen years in the State legislature. McArthur, in addition, had twice been elected to Congress. A traveler journeying through Columbus later described Lucas in this manner: "A plain, farmer-like-looking man, having a countenance strongly marked by contemplation and devotion. His practical information is said to be extensive, and his moral habits of the very best. His views are said to be a little touched with radicalism; but nevertheless, he is esteemed to be above the smaller intrigues of party."²⁹ The vote for the governorship gave McArthur 49,668; Lucas, 49,186; scattered, 226. The vote of Preble and Wood counties did not arrive in time to be counted. In the former, where McArthur had a plurality of almost eleven hundred votes, it was suspected that David F. Heaton had deliberately held back the returns. Governor Allen Trimble thought that if the returns from these counties had been included, the showing would have "looked better"³⁰—with a majority of from twelve to fifteen hundred rather

²⁸ Cleveland *Herald*, Oct. 28, 1830.

²⁹ Hamilton *Intelligencer*, Dec. 14, 1830; *Ohio State Journal*, Jan. 19, 1833.

³⁰ Allen Trimble to Duncan McArthur, Dec. 9, 1830, McArthur MSS.



28. ROBERT LUCAS (1781-1853)

First Jacksonian Democrat to become governor of Ohio (1832-36). Courtesy of Ohio State Museum.

than about 230. At any rate, the anti-Jackson men felt that they had ample cause to rejoice. Eight out of fourteen congressional seats had been won, with the defeat of the one Ohio congressman (Shields) who had steadily supported Jackson on the Indian bill and the Maysville veto, with a reduction of almost 1,300 in the majority given to the other Ohio representative (Findlay) who had voted for the Indian bill, and with the return by a seven hundred majority of the former Jacksonian congressman (Stanbery) who had openly denounced Jackson on the Maysville veto question.³¹ They had also elected the governor and controlled the legislature, insuring the selection of an anti-Jackson senator.

Charles Hammond, the *Cincinnati* editor, declared "that the current of public opinion, which, in 1827 had set so strongly in favor of General Jackson" had passed its flood and had begun to subside.³² The selection of an inferior cabinet occupied with squabbles over the chastity of a cabinet member's wife (Peggy Eaton), the granting of offices to greedy politicians, the recall of Harrison, the driving of the Indians from their homes so as to benefit land speculators, the discouragement of internal improvements, he thought, had produced that result.³³ A Jackson paper admitted that the opposition leaders were in "complete ecstasies" and that the followers of the President were much disappointed. Consolation for the Jacksonians, who had "been lulled into a false security," was found in the fact that they had lost the gubernatorial contest in 1828 and yet had carried the Presidential election in the same year. Only about 100,000 votes had been cast in the recent election, in comparison with 131,000 in 1828, and it was argued that the results would have been different if the Jackson supporters, who were scattered through the rural districts and did "not attend elections so generally as the inhabitants of the towns," had done their duty.³⁴

The Jacksonians, nevertheless, considered the outcome a distinct blow to their prospects. One of their number in Ohio wrote, "It

³¹ *Hamilton Intelligencer*, Nov. 2, 11, 1830; *Cincinnati Gazette*, Nov. 11, 1830.

³² Charles Hammond to Ewing, *Cincinnati*, Oct. 18, 1830, Ewing MSS.

³³ *Cincinnati Gazette*, Nov. 11, 1830.

³⁴ *Ohio State Bulletin*, Oct. 27, Nov. 24, 1830; *Cincinnati Advertiser*, Nov. 24, 1830.

has turned out worse than we feared, and we are completely foiled at every point of the compass.”³⁵ Elsewhere the reaction was the same. “O recreant Ohio,” exclaimed a politician in northern New York.³⁶ Thomas Ritchie, the renowned Richmond editor, was perplexed: “The apparent backsliding of Ohio ought to be explained if it admit of any. It does not look well. I had relied with implicit confidence on the opinion of Major Lewis and Mr. Barry, and a letter which I had seen from Judge Hayward that all was right in that State. Some key, however, ought to be furnished for her seeming change of position.” Secretary of the Treasury Samuel D. Ingham said that Ohio had become worse than debatable ground.³⁷

To the opponents of Jackson, the victory was “as important as it was unexpected,” and they at once began to consider who should be chosen by the legislature to the Senate. Jacob Burnet announced that he would not be a candidate for reelection. William Henry Harrison was eager for the place, and Joseph Vance found it “highly gratifying” that his name was also being considered. Thomas Ewing and Edward King, however, were the leading anti-Jackson contestants, but Vance apparently felt that in case of a deadlock, he might be a compromise candidate.³⁸ Micajah T. Williams, a native of North Carolina who had settled in Cincinnati in 1812 and who had served as a legislator, as canal commissioner, and as surveyor-general, was the candidate of the Jackson caucus. On the first ballot he received forty-nine votes to thirty-three for Ewing and twenty-one for King. After the second or third ballot, King, apparently not wishing to jeopardize the chances of victory for the anti-Jacksonians, wrote the name of Ewing on his ticket and held it up for the other members of the legislature to see. On

³⁵ John Reeves to McLean, Lebanon, Oct. 2, 1830, McLean MSS.

³⁶ Charles J. DeWitt to Azariah C. Flagg, Kingston, Oct. 20, 1830, Miscellaneous Papers, 1824-1836 (in New York City Public Library).

³⁷ Thomas Ritchie to Martin Van Buren, Richmond, Nov. 2, 1830, Van Buren MSS. (in Library of Congress); James B. Gardiner, Memorandum, Washington, Mar. 22, 1831, *ibid.*

³⁸ Joseph Vance to Duncan McArthur, Washington, Dec. 19, 1830, McArthur MSS.; *id.* to *id.*, Jan. 3, 1831, *ibid.*

the fifth ballot Ewing and Williams each received fifty-one votes with two still clinging to King, but on the seventh ballot Ewing obtained fifty-four votes and was declared elected.³⁹ John Quincy Adams reported that there had been "great anxiety and alarm" among the anti-Jacksonians lest Williams should be chosen, hence much rejoicing among them attended Ewing's election.⁴⁰ The *Cincinnati Gazette* predicted that there would be "no sniveling neutrality" on the part of the new senator, and Burnet declared his successor would be "an able, firm and efficient member," one who was "well in on the aim" of all his plans.⁴¹

Ewing, then forty-one years old, was a native of Virginia, whose family had brought him to Ohio as a small boy. On the frontier in what is now Athens County he had shown an avid interest in books, and before he was eight, according to his autobiography, he had read the entire Bible. Labor in the Kanawha salt-works enabled him to study at Ohio University, where he received an A. B. degree in 1815. He studied law in a Lancaster law office and became prosecutor of Fairfield County. A man of massive frame and forceful character, he was known as a lawyer of keen intellectual powers.

In the meantime, politicians of every shade of opinion were giving some attention to the Presidential question. In fact, even before the inauguration of Jackson in March, 1829, there was speculation as to the prospects four years later. Some anti-Jacksonians believed that results might be far different in 1832 with the magnetic Henry Clay rather than the austere Adams as the standard-bearer of the party. Trimble was of the opinion that the State favored Clay three to one, for the Kentuckian's advocacy of internal improvements had had a "prodigious effect" upon public sentiment. "You may assure Mr. Clay," wrote the governor, "that Ohio will as certainly support him as that he lives to enjoy her suffrage."⁴² The

³⁹ Hamilton *Intelligencer*, Jan. 4, 1831.

⁴⁰ John Quincy Adams, *Memoirs*, ed. by C. F. Adams (Philadelphia, 1874-7), VIII, 263.

⁴¹ *Cincinnati Gazette*, Jan. 6, 1831; Jacob Burnet to Duncan McArthur, Washington, Jan. 8, 1831, McArthur MSS.

⁴² Trimble to Duncan McArthur, Feb. 13, 1829, *ibid.*

Jackson press in Ohio, quickly sensed this movement in behalf of Clay, and one paper commented: "There is scarcely a doubt but Mr. Clay intends to rally the broken forces of the Administration and pit himself in opposition to the Republican candidate, whoever he may be."⁴³

Newspapers which had adhered to the Adams-Clay party in 1828, took pains to comment upon the attentions showered upon Clay on his journey home to Kentucky early in 1829, but they denied that he was pushing his aspirations for the Presidency.⁴⁴ Moses Dawson of the Jacksonian Cincinnati *Advertiser* asserted that the opposition to the new Administration planned to run one candidate in the East and one in the West, thus hoping to throw the election into the House, but insisted that such strategy would fail. At the same time the pro-Jackson Cincinnati *National Republican* claimed that Clay would be brought forth by the western state legislatures during the next winter, if it could be arranged "by any intrigue, bargain, and management."⁴⁵ Clay's own views had already been expressed in January in a declaration to a personal friend: "Whether I ought to be brought out, and *when*, must be left exclusively to my friends. . . . The time *may* arise next summer or winter; I should think hardly earlier than the latter."⁴⁶

Charles Hammond, who had practically been Clay's political manager in Ohio in 1824 and who edited the most influential paper in the Old Northwest, meantime had become lukewarm toward Clay's ambitions. Hammond had received no political reward for his services. Possibly Clay realized that Hammond's abilities were as critic and editor rather than as administrator or judge. Hammond had hinted to Clay in 1827 that he might like the postmastership at Cincinnati but, obtaining no tangible recognition of his services, he was complaining bitterly in 1829. He wrote:

"I mean to keep aloof as to the next campaign. The specimen

⁴³ St. Clairsville *Gazette*, Jan. 24, 1829.

⁴⁴ *Ohio State Journal*, April 9, 30, 1829.

⁴⁵ Cincinnati *Gazette*, Aug. 12, 1829.

⁴⁶ Clay to Francis Brooke, Jan. 10, 1829, Clay MSS.

Clay has given us of his opinion of men fit for office, holds out little inducement to enlist again under his banners. It is little worth our while to fight at the front of the battle, that when the battle is over we may occupy the station of liverymen for Kentucky or obtain the honor of a family dinner in company with some Dr. Floyd or other from the South.”⁴⁷ Early in 1829, John Sloane who was just completing ten consecutive years in the Federal House wrote Hammond that personally he remained partial to Clay but that only a drastic change in sentiment west of the mountains could bring him success. Sloane suggested that it would be unwise to oppose McLean if Clay proved unavailable. In this situation Hammond determined not to commit himself “for or against any of the new pretenders” but “to have an eye to the most popular side of future questions” if they involved no political or personal immorality.⁴⁸ Hammond asserted privately that the constant “vindicative abuse” of Clay by the Jacksonians was “unquestionable evidence” of “how much they feared the hunted, though unsubdued, Lion of the West.”⁴⁹ Yet, the Cincinnati editor apparently deemed it wise to divert attention, at least temporarily, from the ambitious Kentuckian. Accordingly, with the announced intention of permitting his readers to “become acquainted with opinions expressed abroad,” he copied from the Haverhill, Massachusetts, *Essex Gazette* a long article advocating McLean for the Presidency.⁵⁰ This action on the part of an erstwhile arch-supporter of Clay aroused animated comment from Kentucky to New England and prompted the Lexington *Kentucky Gazette* to cry out that Hammond had “abandoned Mr. Clay and fixed his hopes upon Judge McLean.” Probably the truth was that Hammond was sending up a trial balloon to test popular opinion.

In any event, the result of this episode was the presentation of

⁴⁷ For further discussion see F. P. Weisenburger, *Life of Charles Hammond* (Columbus, 1934), 55-7.

⁴⁸ Letter dated Washington, Feb. 13, 1829, Hammond MSS. (in Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society Library, Columbus).

⁴⁹ Hammond to John C. Wright, Cincinnati, Feb. 26, 1829, *ibid.*

⁵⁰ Cincinnati *Gazette*, July 24, 1829.

the justice' name in such a way as to test public sentiment. McLean hoped that Jackson would not seek reelection (since his health was somewhat uncertain), and that in that event, his own middle-of-the-road position would make him available as "Old Hickory's" successor. As a Supreme Court justice, however, he shied away from the prospect of "the electioneering arena" and from the "political chicanery" which was sometimes necessary to obtain a nomination.⁵¹ The acceptance of the high judicial position had placed McLean in a situation not wholly advantageous to one with his burning political ambition. Yet, he realized that the acceptance of a cabinet position under Jackson might also have presented practical difficulties in the way of his advancement to the Presidency. Perhaps the Supreme Court post at the time seemed to involve fewer risks. In any event, as a justice he did not feel that he was permanently abjuring politics, and in June, 1829, he wrote to Buchanan, intimating that he would consider a fair political offer.

Many voters felt, however, that a Supreme Court justice ought not drag the judicial ermine through the mire of politics. McLean denied the validity of such an assumption and bewailed the advantage which a cabinet officer had over a justice in a struggle for the place of primacy. Patently jealous of Martin Van Buren, the secretary of state, McLean complained that the New Yorker had his agents and presses in Ohio and other states breaking ground for their favorite with relentless persistency. McLean certainly was not a brilliant personality. His chief assets were his great vitality, his laborious devotion to duty, his wide acquaintance with local politicians through a long administration of the Post-office Department, his studied cultivation of the good will of men of different political views, and a masterful countenance which gave an impression of extraordinary capacity. His prospects for favorable consideration by a major political group in 1832 rested upon the possibility of the necessity for a compromise candidate to head the Administration ticket. Such a situation, of course, did not arise. If Jackson had not sought reelection, if Van Buren had not so defi-

⁵¹ Weisenburger, *John McLean*, 69-70.

nately attained the President's favor, and if the tariff issue had become acute in a larger section of the South, McLean might conceivably have emerged as a candidate fitted to the circumstances. In such a contingency, John C. Calhoun's views might have been objectionable to the North and West, and Van Buren might have seemed too much of a thorn in Calhoun's flesh to have been acceptable to the South. Both Calhoun and Van Buren, however, were too ambitious to step aside for any other person except under the most extraordinary circumstances. As events turned out, party lines in 1832 were, in general, a continuation of those of 1828. McLean, as one who had cultivated the approval of men in both political groups, proved unacceptable to the ardent partisans in either one. For a time after 1828, McLean had made a real effort to be discreet in his political remarks.⁵² As time went on, however, he apparently became less prudent, and by January, 1830, he was speaking openly in opposition to the Jackson Administration.⁵³

The parties in Ohio were cautiously feeling their way in the midst of much uncertainty. Hammond asserted that all "men of integrity and honor" belonged either to the party supporting internal improvements and the tariff or to the party in opposition to these principles, but that a third party of "Swiss politicians" followed a personality—Jackson.⁵⁴ A writer in a Jackson paper also referred to three parties, dividing them according to their attitude on the tariff: 1. The party of Clay, favoring "the Chinese system," involving a high tariff wall around the country so as to exclude foreign manufactures entirely; 2. The party of the South, denying the power and expediency of protection; 3. The moderate party, apparently led by Jackson and dominant in Ohio, advocating a tariff bearing equally upon interests in every section of the Union.⁵⁵

Ohio was clearly in favor of a protective tariff, hence the south-

⁵² Hamilton *Intelligencer*, July 28, 1829.

⁵³ Jesse Burgess Thomas to Walter Lowrie, Jan. 15, 1830, Van Buren MSS.

⁵⁴ Cincinnati *Gazette*, Sept. 17, 1829.

⁵⁵ "An Ohioan," in *Ohio State Bulletin*, Sept. 8, 1830.

ern antitariff policy had no substantial following in Ohio. When George McDuffie of South Carolina brought into the House in 1830 a bill based upon tariff principles favored by the Old South, every congressman from Ohio voted to have it laid aside.⁵⁶ Some ardent anti-Jacksonians—zealous supporters of the tariff—felt that the success of their party depended partly upon their ability to attract voters from the moderate tariff men into their ranks. In order to do this, some favored a candidate other than Clay. Elisha Whittlesey, long an important Ohio congressman, wrote that if McLean could heal his old irritation with Clay, the Kentuckian's friends would unite upon McLean so as to leave Jackson with few followers except the Van Buren men.⁵⁷

The old antagonism of Clay's followers toward McLean would not down, however. The Ohioan had been an early supporter of the American System.⁵⁸ In 1828 he had again endorsed that political creed, and during the summer of 1831, he elaborated his views, asserting that he would require of the manufacturer "capital, skill, and the most perfect machinery, and due regard to economy" and would then "give him such protection as would make his business equal to that of the merchant, the agriculturist, or the person engaged in commerce." At the same time on the question of internal improvements McLean advocated the bestowal of the Federal surplus upon the states in proportion to their representation in Congress, for the construction of such works as had been sanctioned by Congress. This apparently marked a retreat from his position in 1828 when he had written that he believed that the country could scarcely have too many roads and canals.⁵⁹ Many of Clay's friends believed that a failure to nominate their favorite meant a practical repudiation of the American System. Earlier, one Ohio newspaper had stated that if the System were to be abandoned, it knew of no man of the opposite party whom it could so cordially endorse

⁵⁶ *House Journal*, 21 Cong., 1 Sess., 268.

⁵⁷ Elisha Whittlesey to Joshua R. Giddings, Jan. 17, 1831, Giddings MSS.

⁵⁸ *Id.* to McLean, June 9, 1830, McLean MSS.

⁵⁹ Weisenburger, *John McLean*, 75-6.

as McLean. "But," it hastened to elaborate, "we are not convinced that it is necessary to give up the interests of this system as hopeless." Similarly, another Ohio paper pointed out that tariff supporters looked upon Clay as their "Pilot" and that the friends of internal improvements turned to him as their "Polar Star."⁶⁰

Thus, just as the ambitions of Calhoun, Van Buren, and even Jackson himself were insuperable barriers to the development of any flow of enthusiasm for McLean among the Jackson Democrats, the persistence of Clay's supporters gave the justice little reason for encouragement from the party of the opposition. The times were not favorable to a successful movement for the Ohioan within either major political party. McLean had sensed this as early as the summer of 1830 and had written bitterly to his friend Whittlesey:

"Mr. Clay's friends are determined to cling to his interests. . . . This will keep Gen. Jackson in the field, and is, perhaps, the only thing that can do it. And, if this shall be the ground of the ensuing contest, the result will not, for a moment be doubtful. If Gen. Jackson should call out a regiment, and drive the Senate or perhaps the House of Representatives into the Potomac, the act would be eulogized by the great mass of his editors, as one evidencing great firmness, and by which, the liberties of the country were preserved."⁶¹

In the meantime the difficulties among the Jacksonians with Calhoun and Van Buren each seeking the ascendancy, were reflected in Ohio politics. When the famous Jefferson birthday dinner was held in April, 1830, the Jackson papers of Ohio were noticeably silent. According to an eastern paper, Ohio and Pennsylvania representatives refused to attend "this humbug" gotten up "for political effect." In commenting on Jackson's famous nationalistic toast at the dinner, the Cincinnati *Gazette* thought

⁶⁰ Portsmouth *Western Times*, Aug. 22, 1829; Ravenna (Ohio) *Western Courier*, Aug. 21, 1829.

⁶¹ McLean to Whittlesey, Cincinnati, June 3, 1830, Whittlesey MSS. (in Western Reserve Historical Society Library, Cleveland).

that it carried "rather a sharp rebuke" to the nullifiers which was "swallowed with wry faces by many."⁶² William Stanbery, Jacksonian congressman from Ohio, who was soon to take issue with the President on the Maysville Road question, rejoiced that the Chief Executive had taken a position which ought to cause his former opponents "to withdraw their opposition to him."⁶³

The Eaton affair, of course, was not passed over in silence. One Jackson paper referred to Mrs. Eaton's "elegant manners and urbanity of disposition," while another retorted to the lady's detractors with the question, "What has this nation to do with the virtues or foibles of an individual female?"⁶⁴

In January, 1831, about fifty-two Jackson members of the Ohio legislature had urged the President to seek reelection, and the latter had replied that it was his "duty to yield" to the "solicitations."⁶⁵ When news reached Ohio in April of the dissolution of the cabinet, the *Cincinnati Gazette* declared that the new cabinet would support the "ulterior views" of Van Buren, since it had been understood for some time that the New Yorker was to be the Administration candidate for Vice-President in 1832.⁶⁶ Apparently, however, the dissolution of the cabinet and its political consequences did not strengthen Jackson's position in the State. A prominent Jackson man wrote that if the Presidential elections were held in the fall of 1831 thousands would not attend the polls. He feared that Jackson had lost Ohio "irrecoverably and forever," and that the only way to regain it, was to "let Mr. and Mrs. Eaton go to the d --- l and trust his own common sense."⁶⁷

The Presidential question began to center around the personalities of Clay and Jackson. A new paper, the *American*, had

⁶² *Cincinnati Gazette*, Apr. 30, 1830.

⁶³ William Stanbery to Benjamin Briggs, April 1830, in *Cincinnati Gazette*, May 31, 1830.

⁶⁴ *Cincinnati Advertiser*, quoted in *Ohio State Bulletin*, July 28, 1830; Columbus (Ohio) *Sentinel*, June 28, 1831.

⁶⁵ *Ohio State Bulletin*, Feb. 25, 1831; *Hamilton Intelligencer*, Mar. 15, 1831.

⁶⁶ *Cincinnati Gazette*, May 12, 1831.

⁶⁷ John W. Campbell to Elijah Hayward, Solitude, Sept. 5, 1831, Jackson MSS.

appeared in Cincinnati on Washington's birthday, 1830, with enthusiastic support for Clay. The Kentuckian arrived in Columbus in July as attorney in a legal case but also, it was asserted, as one interested in procuring his nomination by the next Ohio legislature.⁶⁸ He remained about two weeks in the Ohio capital where he was banqueted by over three hundred mechanics of the town. On his return home he proceeded via southwestern Ohio in a rather leisurely manner with demonstrations en route, and public dinners in his honor at Yellow Springs and Hamilton, and at Cincinnati where seven hundred persons thronged the Apollonian Gardens to do him honor.⁶⁹

Hammond still tried to divert attention from Clay. He opposed holding a State convention to nominate an anti-Administration Presidential candidate. During the summer of 1831 he endeavored to prevent the sending of delegates from Ohio to the National Republican Convention at Baltimore in December. In November he retorted in the *Gazette* to his critics: "To press Mr. Clay a candidate for the Presidency, upon a forlorn hope, or with a determined resolution not first to see that his election is morally certain, is to do him no service and the country much injury."⁷⁰

Twenty Ohioans, however, were chosen as delegates to the National Republican Convention, including Jeremiah Morrow and Allen Trimble who were former governors. The nomination of Clay and John Sergeant by the convention was favorably received by party men in the State and, according to the *Ohio State Journal*, the delegates commanded "the unqualified approbation of their constituents."⁷¹ Hammond thereupon joined in wholehearted support of the ticket, and in June, 1832, after an interval of over two years, he revived his correspondence with Clay. He took pains to explain his editorial policy of previous months, which had been questioned by some of Clay's Kentucky friends as infidelity to the party cause, but could not refrain from observ-

⁶⁸ Hamilton (Ohio) *Telegraph*, in *Ohio State Bulletin*, July 21, 1830.

⁶⁹ *Ohio State Bulletin*, July 21, 1830; *Cincinnati Gazette*, July 31, Aug. 5, 26, 1830.

⁷⁰ Nov. 17, 1831.

⁷¹ Dec. 24, 1831.

ing: "We think that the most effectual mode of subserving the general cause is to take care of affairs in our own state, and that our brethren in other states instead of reading to us, would do better to manage successfully affairs at home."⁷² In the meantime, the State elections of 1831 had passed quietly. About twenty National Republicans were elected to the Senate and about sixteen Democrats, with about forty National Republicans to the House and about thirty-two Democrats.⁷³

Before long, Jacksonian party machinery was again functioning effectively as county meetings were held to select delegates to the Democratic State Convention to meet in Columbus in January, 1832. Robert Lucas was nominated for governor, an electoral ticket was drawn up, delegates were chosen to the national convention, and resolutions endorsing the National Administration were adopted.⁷⁴

The rejection of Van Buren as minister to Great Britain aroused his supporters in Ohio. Elijah Hayward, the Cincinnati editor who had been rewarded by a position in Washington, wrote to Van Buren in London that the rejection had been accomplished only through the efforts of the Bank of the United States and that he would vouch for Ohio's support for his elevation to the Vice-Presidency and the Presidency.⁷⁵ As a matter of fact, Van Buren apparently was not particularly popular in Ohio, but Robert T. Lytle and his friends in Cincinnati and John Hamm in Zanesville, as well as others, worked steadily for his interests.⁷⁶

As preparations were being made for the Democratic Convention at Baltimore, leaders in Washington endeavored to smooth the way for the Van Buren cause. While stopping in Washington en route to Baltimore, Lucas and most of the Ohio delegation were brought to the office of Jackson's counselor, William B. Lewis.

⁷² Weisenburger, *Charles Hammond*, 63-4.

⁷³ Hamilton *Intelligencer*, Nov. 1, 1831.

⁷⁴ Columbus *Sentinel*, Jan. 10, 1832; Cleveland *Herald*, Jan. 19, 1832.

⁷⁵ Letter dated Washington, Jan. 30, 1832, Van Buren MSS.

⁷⁶ William Miner to McLean, Columbus, Feb. 26, 1832; Thomas L. Hamer to *id.*, Georgetown, Mar. 20, 1832, McLean MSS.

Elijah Hayward, as usual, was active, and apparently by the arrangement of Lewis, it was agreed that the presidency of the convention should be offered to Judge John Overton of Tennessee and, upon his declining it, to Lucas of Ohio. Lucas accompanied Overton from Washington to Baltimore in the latter's private carriage. Ohioans did their expected part at the convention, even one of the opening prayers being offered by the versatile preacher-politician, "Father" William Burke, Methodist minister and postmaster at Cincinnati.⁷⁷

The great issue in the campaign of 1832 proved to be the Bank question. When the question had been mentioned in Jackson's first annual message, Hammond had declared the President's words "a severe and premature thrust," but the Jacksonians had followed the cue of their leader, and Dawson of the *Advertiser* had declared that all honest intelligent men were disappointed in the Bank and that "even Tories" were sick of it.⁷⁸ When Jackson had stopped at Cincinnati on his return to the Southwest in the summer of 1830, the Bank question had been mentioned in private conversations, for shortly afterwards Dawson had written to the President expressing regret that opportunity had not been afforded for the latter to express "more fully" his ideas upon the question. He then proceeded to elaborate his own views of the matter (possibly colored by previous conversations with the Chief Executive). In reply, Jackson stated that he had no time to go into the Bank question, but he, nevertheless, proceeded to give one of his first amplifications of his own ideas of a "National Bank of Deposit."⁷⁹ During the same summer, Clay speaking in Cincinnati had dealt cautiously with the question, asserting that the renewal of the charter of the Bank nearly six years later would be "a question of expediency to be decided by the then existing state of the

⁷⁷ William Berkeley Lewis to Joseph H. Larwill, Washington, Mar. 15, 1839; Larwill to Lewis, Mar. 27, 1839, Van Buren MSS.; Columbus *Sentinel*, June 7, 1832.

⁷⁸ Cincinnati *Advertiser*, Dec. 23, 1829.

⁷⁹ Moses Dawson to Jackson, Cincinnati, July 5, 1830; Jackson to Dawson, Hermitage, July 17, 1830, Jackson MSS.

country.”⁸⁰ Not much was said during most of 1831 in Ohio about the Bank question. The ardent Jacksonian newspaper at Columbus declared that it was a question on which “honest men may honestly differ” but expressed fears of the results of a rechartering of a national bank and a preference for an increase of State banks on the “Safety Fund System.” In January, 1832, the Democratic State Convention adopted a resolution opposing the rechartering of the Bank, perhaps upon advice from Washington. The Democratic Newark *Advocate* denounced the action as a firebrand thrown into the party ranks to drive away Bank Democrats.⁸¹

Ohioans in general did not feel that a rechartering of the Bank would succeed in 1832, but when the bill providing for such action passed Congress, both Ohio senators and ten representatives voted affirmatively, three representatives voted negatively, and one did not vote at all.⁸² John S. Lytle, prominent Democratic politician of Cincinnati, wrote on the very day that the bill passed the House, that he had prophesied three years before that Jackson would veto such a measure. Samuel F. Vinton and Joseph Vance, prominent National Republican congressmen from Ohio, believed that the friends of the Bank would be unsuccessful in their attempts to re-charter the institution because of the power of the Administration. The former was certain that Jackson would administer a veto.⁸³ After the bill had actually passed both houses of Congress, less certainty existed in regard to the matter. Vance, writing as the document lay before the President, reported, “Some begin to think that the old man will yet give it his approval; be this as it may, one thing is certain, it has brought him to a *solemn* pause.”⁸⁴ The National Republican paper at Delaware believed that the President would not “encounter the hazard of a veto,” and in the very issue of

⁸⁰ *Cincinnati Gazette*, Aug. 26, 1830.

⁸¹ *Ohio State Journal*, Jan. 14, 18, 1832.

⁸² *Senate Journal*, 22 Cong., 1 Sess., 346; *House Journal*, 22 Cong., 1 Sess., 1075.

⁸³ John S. Lytle to McLean, Springfield, July 3, 1832, McLean MSS.; Vinton to Duncan McArthur, Washington, Jan. 18, 1832; *id.* to *id.*, Washington, May 9, 1832. Vance to *id.*, Washington, April 30, 1832; *id.* to *id.*, May 30, 1832, McArthur MSS.

⁸⁴ To *id.*, Washington, July 6, 1832, *ibid.*

the *Ohio State Journal* that contained a postscript announcing the veto, the opinion appeared: "Caught 'between Hawk and Buzzard,' it is generally believed that Jackson will permit the bill to become law, by neglecting to return it."⁸⁵ The *Columbus Sentinel* certainly had a truer conception of Jackson's attitude, however, and probably expressed the general Democratic sentiment of the State quite accurately: "There can be no good reason why, if ever, it should be rechartered now, four years in advance of the time when the present charter expires. It is pushed at this time on political grounds. . . . [But the President] is the man who dares to do his duty. No matter what the responsibility, or what the emergency, he knows of no rule of action but that of right and justice."⁸⁶

The veto message, when announced, was attacked by the National Republicans as "the poorest state paper to which Gen. Jackson has affixed his signature since his elevation to the Presidency," "so full of error, so fraught with such execrable bad taste, containing so much that ought not to be found in it, nothing that it should contain," that its circulation ought not to be aided.⁸⁷ The objection of the President that the renewal of the Bank charter would add to the value of the stock at the expense of the public was deemed one that might be used against any successful business. The argument that the masses of Americans were excluded from being stockholders was considered "wholly fallacious" and "of a most Jacobitical cast," for "it would be just as proper to complain that every man cannot be the owner of a Palace or a Hermitage as that he cannot be a stockholder."⁸⁸ The assertion that it was too early to recharter the Bank was deemed "very singular," since Jackson had taken up the matter as early as 1829, while the claim that part of the stock was held by foreigners was termed ridiculous in view of the need of a new country for foreign capital. The constitutional argument was dismissed because of its "puerility."

⁸⁵ *Ohio State Gazette*, June 21, 1832; *Ohio State Journal*, July 14, 1832.

⁸⁶ *Columbus Sentinel*, June 21, 1832.

⁸⁷ *Ohio State Journal*, July 28, 1832; *Cincinnati Gazette*, July 18, 1832.

⁸⁸ *Ohio State Journal*, July 28, 1832.

Dire prophecies of the result of the veto were at once forthcoming. Many bemoaned that the country did not show the prosperity of twelve months previous. The Jacksonians, however, were not asleep. The opponents of the veto surreptitiously suspended from the State-house steeple an effigy of Jackson holding the veto message in one hand and a bank bill in the other, but the supporters of the President fired off a cannon to celebrate the reception of the news of the Executive action.⁸⁹ Partisan newspapers hailed the action as "a second declaration of independence" and a triumph over "monopolies created for the benefit of foreigners, and wielded by their influence." Twenty-seven Ohio papers were listed to show that "every democratic journal throughout the State" spoke "in a tone of high approval" of the message, and it was claimed that the result would be ten thousand additional votes for Jackson in the ensuing elections. A candidate for Congress specifically endorsed the veto, thousands of copies of the veto message were printed in German, and soon Hammond was regretting "that the question of rechartering the Bank of the United States should have been connected with the Presidential election." Thus, the Bank question became an issue in the elections, which the Jacksonians claimed would prove the veto "one of the proudest deeds" in the President's career.⁹⁰

The Antimasonic question was injected into the campaign of 1832 and figured prominently in Ohio politics for a number of years. As early as September, 1826, a Ravenna, Ohio, newspaper had cautioned the Masonic fraternity against a New Yorker who called himself Captain Morgan.⁹¹ After the mysterious disappearance of this individual, heated controversies arose in the State. An editor at St. Clairsville protested against the censuring of a society for the outrageous acts of a few of its members, while a Georgetown journalist complained that between the Masons and Antimasons he could scarcely pursue a policy that would satisfy

⁸⁹ *Columbus Sentinel*, July 19, 26, 1832.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, Aug. 2, 7, 10, 1832; *Cincinnati Gazette*, Sept. 13, 1832.

⁹¹ *Ravenna Western Courier*, Sept. 26, 1826.

his subscribers.⁹² The Western Reserve region, peopled with a large New England element and geographically connected with the Antimasonic areas of Pennsylvania and New York, was at all times the stronghold of the movement in the State. Thurlow Weed, Antimasonic editor of New York state, said that his paper in 1828 had subscriptions from all parts of this area, and William H. Seward in 1830 traced the beginning of the agitation to the fact that an "editor fourteen months ago, by invitation, went with only his printing materials from the city of New York, and commenced an Antimasonic paper in Portage County."⁹³ Apparently, however, the movement first secured a foothold in Ashtabula County, for the *Ohio Luminary* at Jefferson, Ohio, was seemingly in operation as early as the summer of 1828, months before the first number of the Portage County paper, the *Ohio Star*, was issued on January 6, 1830.⁹⁴

During the early part of 1829, the Antimasonic propaganda made definite headway in the State. Opponents of the movement, which attracted attention in Cuyahoga and Medina counties, charged that it was the result of the "machinations of a few political wise acres." In the fall, meetings were called for Portage, Medina, and Lorain counties to make nominations for county and State officers, but the movement made little impression on the State elections.⁹⁵ By the early part of 1830, there were nine Antimasonic papers in the State, and during the summer a State convention of thirty delegates met at Canton. This meeting, on July 21, selected fourteen delegates to the national convention at Philadelphia in September, but otherwise did not show political tendencies except to appoint a State central committee of five members, with headquarters in Portage County. After the elections of 1830 the

⁹² St. Clairsville *National Historian*, Feb. 24, 1827; Georgetown (Ohio) *Western Aegis*, Oct. 2, 1827.

⁹³ Charles McCarthy, "Antimasonic Party," *American Historical Association. Annual Report . . . 1902* (Washington, 1903), I, 526.

⁹⁴ Cleveland *Herald*, June 24, 1830; Ravenna *Ohio Star*, Jan. 6, 1830.

⁹⁵ *Ohio State Journal*, Mar. 26, Apr. 16, 1829; Cleveland *Herald*, Apr. 23, Aug. 6, Sept. 10, Nov. 12, 1829.

party press claimed success in Portage and Ashtabula counties, in Geauga and Medina counties except for a single candidate, and in Seneca, Huron, Wayne, Tuscarawas, and Adams counties to some degree.⁹⁶

At the Canton convention a resolution had been adopted calling a State convention for the following January. This met at Columbus on January 11, 1831, with twenty-six delegates present, all from the north central and northeastern sections of the State with the exception of three delegates from Franklin County and one each from Athens, Adams, and Highland counties. Darius Lyman of Portage County was chosen chairman, and resolutions were passed, denouncing Masonry "as a great and dangerous evil" and disclaiming connection with the regular parties as "the only effectual method of accomplishing the purposes of Antimasonry." An unfriendly critic claimed that the convention had been instigated by Henry D. Ward, who was sent out by the Antimasons of New York.⁹⁷ By this time the movement on the Western Reserve seriously concerned the National Republican leaders, for Antimasonic votes were drawn chiefly from those who, under other circumstances, would have followed that party. In the elections of 1830, McArthur's majority had, partly on this account, been only a few hundred. Refusing to join with either of the older parties the Antimasons had elected representatives in Ashtabula, Geauga, and Portage counties, and had intrenched themselves in county offices.⁹⁸ The party, however, only had about fifteen members in both houses, and the nature of their principles was such as to make these, on most questions, indistinguishable from the anti-Jacksonian members. McLean, eager to obtain a Presidential nomination from any channel that offered a reasonable prospect, carefully weighed the possibilities of one by the Antimasons. During 1830 he stated his position to members of the party both in Ohio and Penn-

⁹⁶ *Ohio Star*, July 28, Oct. 14, 21, 28, Nov. 4, 1830.

⁹⁷ *Ohio Monitor*, Jan. 3, 17, 1831; *Portsmouth (Ohio) Courier*, Feb. 4, 1831.

⁹⁸ Pease to Ewing, Warren, Nov. 28, 1830, Ewing MSS.; Giddings to Duncan McArthur, Jefferson, March 3, 1832, McArthur MSS.

sylvania. In his letter to the former he declared that he had never acquainted himself with the principles of Freemasonry, hence he could neither approve nor condemn them.⁹⁹

During August and September, 1831, local Antimasonic meetings in Ohio chose delegates to the party convention which met at Baltimore, September 21. In the meantime, McLean, satisfied that he could not successfully oppose Clay and Jackson, declined to have his name presented to the convention for the Presidency, and, at length the delegates chose William Wirt of Maryland. One of the seven delegates from Ohio, Warren Jenkins, editor of the party organ at Columbus, wrote later that he had gone to the convention confident that McLean would be nominated and that such action had been prevented only by McLean's letter of declination.¹⁰⁰ The nomination of Wirt, wrote one Ohio National Republican leader, "has no doubt equally surprised all parties; not even excepting the actors themselves. As this result was never anticipated by any one, it is not easy to conjecture what may be its bearing on the Presidential election." At the same time, newspapers of both major parties agreed that Wirt's nomination could serve no good and useful purpose.¹⁰¹ In the fall of 1831, county conventions were held where Antimasons were numerous, to draw up party tickets for the October elections, which resulted in the election of six Antimasons to the State Senate and nine to the House. Two of the former and four of the latter were from the Western Reserve.¹⁰²

By the spring of 1832, it was clear to National Republican leaders in Ohio that a union of some nature with the Antimasons was necessary for success, but such an arrangement appeared difficult. Calvin Pease, a leading politician of the Western Reserve, endeavored to prevent the formation of an Antimasonic State ticket but found that, while moderates among the Antimasons were

⁹⁹ Weisenburger, *John McLean*, 77.

¹⁰⁰ Warren Jenkins to McLean, Columbus, Apr. 23, 1832, McLean MSS.

¹⁰¹ John Sloane to Clay, Wooster, Oct. 15, 1831, Clay MSS.; *Cleveland Advertiser*, Oct. 11, 1831; *Hamilton Intelligencer*, Oct. 13, 1831.

¹⁰² *Ohio Star*, Sept. 22, Nov. 10, 1831.

agreeable, some obstinate members would not yield.¹⁰³ A prominent politician, possibly Hammond, journeyed from Cincinnati to Columbus to effect a compromise with the Antimasons at the time of their convention in June.¹⁰⁴ Later, Governor McArthur, a leading National Republican, wrote that he had urged during the winter, at the extra session of the legislature in June, and at the time of the circuit court in July, that if any man could be agreed upon for governor who was neither a Mason nor an Antimason (he was a Mason), he would renounce any claim to reelection. Apparently the Antimasons insisted on going their own way.¹⁰⁵

When the State Antimasonic Convention met in Columbus, June 12, only eighteen counties were represented by their own delegates. The nomination for governor was first offered to Calvin Pease and then to Alfred Kelley. Both refused to split the anti-Jacksonians of the State, and the nomination went to Darius Lyman, a member of the Ohio Senate.¹⁰⁶ A new State Central Committee was chosen, and a report was presented which said in part:

"We oppose Freemasonry, because it is immoral, in that it imposes upon its members horrid oaths, the taking of which is a violation of the laws of God and man, and the obeying of which leads to the commission of perjury and murder. . . . We oppose it politically. It has seated itself in our political institutions, and not only claims the right, but exercises a power directly at variance with the laws of the land, sapping the very life's blood of our republican institutions."¹⁰⁷ An electoral ticket was drawn up, each elector being required to pledge himself to vote for Wirt and Amos Ellmaker (the Vice-Presidential nominee) or to vacate his place. Three of the electors chosen declined to serve.

The National Republicans, once conciliatory, were becoming impatient. Late in June, at the suggestion of a contributor, Mc-

¹⁰³ Pease to Ewing, Warren, Apr. 4, 1832, Ewing MSS.

¹⁰⁴ Columbus *Sentinel*, June 21, 1832.

¹⁰⁵ Duncan McArthur to Ewing, Fruithill, Aug. 16, 1832, Ewing MSS.

¹⁰⁶ Columbus *Ohio Register and Anti-Masonic Review*, June 16, 23, 1832.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, June 23, 1832.

Arthur's name appeared in the *Ohio State Journal* as the National Republican candidate for governor, and on July 12, a meeting of National Republicans who were attending the Federal court at Columbus, renominated McArthur. At the same time the Central Committee of Correspondence drew up an electoral ticket.¹⁰⁸ McArthur proposed to his friends that they should support Lyman, provided the Antimasons in turn would unite with the National Republicans upon a fusion Presidential electoral ticket, the electors to be unpledged either to Clay or to Wirt but free to act to prevent the election of Jackson. Many of McArthur's friends were unwilling to support Lyman, an avowed Antimason who probably could not be elected; but they were willing to agree upon a man for governor who was neither a Mason nor a professed Antimason, and to form a Presidential electoral ticket on a similar basis or even to name Antimasonic electors in proportion to the strength of their group. McArthur asserted that there were no Masons and at least three Antimasons on the National Republican ticket and hoped that all anti-Jacksonians would support it. He was willing to withdraw from the race for governor if such action would help the election of Clay.¹⁰⁹

Various persons interested themselves in a compromise arrangement. McArthur saw that to bring out a new candidate only a few weeks before the election might not improve the situation, for time would hardly permit publicizing the new nominee among the people of the State. Apparently, however, an arrangement was reached by which McArthur should withdraw, the withdrawal of Lyman should be secured, and Calvin Pease should be the fusion candidate.¹¹⁰ Previously McArthur had not favored Pease, who would be considered an Antimason and would, like Lyman lose the votes of those who would not vote for an avowed Antimasonic candidate. In the meantime, the National Republican Central Committee at Columbus had been carrying on a correspondence with leaders of

¹⁰⁸ *Ohio State Journal*, June 21, 1832; *Columbus Sentinel*, July 19, 1832.

¹⁰⁹ Duncan McArthur to Ewing, Fruithill, Aug. 16, 1832, Ewing MSS.

¹¹⁰ *Id.* to *id.*, Sept. 21, 1832, *ibid.*

the party in the State and had learned that McArthur's declination was not favored. Alfred Kelley was sent to Chillicothe to persuade McArthur to remain in the race. The governor, however, had already agreed to withdraw from the contest and was not then in the city, hence Kelley returned to Columbus. The National Republicans were at last ready to seek the withdrawal of Lyman, but if that were not possible, to support him.¹¹¹ At that late date, there was no alternative but to follow the latter course. Immediately, newspapers which had been supporting McArthur and attacking the Antimasons turned about and praised the nomination of Lyman, as a means of opposing Jackson's political plans.

Clearly, the National Republicans had handled the situation poorly. An experienced politician among them reported that prospects were "more gloomy" in the northern part of the State than he had ever expected them to be and that out of revenge to the Antimasons some National Republicans were turning to Jackson.¹¹² In the Columbus district, moreover, efforts to unite upon a single candidate were unavailing. In the Chillicothe district, McArthur, upon his withdrawal from the race for governor, was reluctantly persuaded to run for Congress. Democratic strength was divided between William Allen and William S. Murphy, the latter an independent Democrat, hence McArthur became overconfident and was defeated by Allen by a single vote. Oddly enough, the victor later became McArthur's son-in-law.¹¹³ In other respects, the October elections were most discouraging to the National Republicans. William Stanbery, former Jacksonian who was now hostile to his principles, was defeated for Congress, along with William Irwin and William Russell, "Bank" Democrats. Ohio's delegation in the next session of the national House consisted of eleven Democrats and eight National Republicans. Allen Trimble, twice governor of the State was defeated for a seat in the legislature, which now came under the control of the Democrats. Lyman, the fusion

¹¹¹ Alfred Kelley to Ewing, Columbus, Sept. 12, 1832, Ewing MSS.

¹¹² Whittlesey to Clay, Canfield, Sept. 19, 1832, Clay MSS.

¹¹³ Reginald C. McGrane, *William Allen* (Columbus, 1925), 33.

candidate for governor polled 63,185 votes to 71,251 for Robert Lucas, who became the first Jacksonian Democratic governor of the State.¹¹⁴

Immediately after the October elections the Antimasonic State Central Committee issued an address to party members urging the support of the National Republican Presidential electors, who under certain circumstances would vote for Wirt and Ellmaker. Warren Jenkins, Antimasonic editor at Columbus, explained that the address had not been decided upon "until direct and positive assurances were given that not one man on that ticket felt himself under [greater] obligations to Clay" than to Wirt. Better to support a ticket containing no Mason and favorable to the Antimasons than to divide the anti-Jackson vote and elect a ticket containing many Masons, was the argument.¹¹⁵ Andrew McElvain, however, was an irreconcilable member of the Antimasonic State Central Committee, and Robert Hanna, well-known leader of the party from Cadiz, was sorely displeased. The former issued a statement saying that all knew that the party would not succeed in 1832 but that ultimate triumph was certain. This statement was endorsed by a group of thirty-two men who contended that the central committee had grossly violated its trust since all knew that the ticket would, under no circumstances, in practise prefer Wirt to Clay.¹¹⁶

Under such circumstances, Ohioans went to the Presidential polls in 1832. A separate Antimasonic ticket containing four names also on the National Republican ticket, appeared on the ballot. The official returns gave Jackson 81,246 votes; Clay, 76,539; Wirt, 509. This was a plurality for Jackson of 4,707 or a majority of 4,198, which hardly varied from that of 4,201 in 1828. Only three counties were found in a different column than when Adams had been defeated: Williams County changing from a support of Adams in 1828 to Jackson, and Madison and Montgomery counties which

¹¹⁴ Columbus *Sentinel*, Oct. 18, Dec. 14, 1832; Trimble to Duncan McArthur, near Hillsborough, Oct. 16, 1832, McArthur MSS.

¹¹⁵ *Ohio Register and Anti-Masonic Review*, Oct. 27, 1832.

¹¹⁶ Columbus *Sentinel*, Oct. 25, 1832.

had given small majorities for Jackson in 1828 now going by a narrow margin for Clay.¹¹⁷ Probably the majority of the Anti-masons of the State supported the Clay or "unpledged" ticket. They were accused of treachery by National Republicans throughout the country, but the charge was not supported by the Clay papers of Ohio. Yet, the National Republicans had little patience with opposition to the Masons, and one of their newspapers declared that such proscription was "unworthy of the enlightened age and country in which we live" and had "as little to do with general politics, as the cut of a coat, or the color of a hat."¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ *Ohio State Journal*, Nov. 17, 1832; *Niles' Weekly Register* (Baltimore, Md.), XLIII (1832), 199-200.

¹¹⁸ *Ohio State Journal*, Nov. 12, 1832.

CHAPTER X

The Emergence of the Whig Party

THE decade of the eighteen-twenties was one of political transition in Ohio and throughout the Nation. Discontented elements rallied under the Jackson banner, especially after the House election of 1825, and routed the time-honored political leadership which had, on the whole, supported the Adams-Clay coalition. After 1828, John Quincy Adams was discredited as a national leader even among his Administration followers, and to Clay fell the task of organizing and directing the opposition to the "leveling influences" of Jacksonian democracy. In 1832, the National Republican Party, with Clay as its Presidential candidate and with its support drawn from the conservative element in national and State politics, again failed to carry the country and went down to defeat in Ohio. The party had, however, polled a huge minority vote in the State, carrying the Western Reserve, the counties to the west of it, and those in the neighborhood of Marietta—where New England influences were dominant, the rich farming areas of the upper Miami and Scioto valleys, and scattered counties elsewhere. In general, leading manufacturers, bankers, land speculators, and prosperous farmers in all sections were National Republicans.

Both the Democratic and National Republican parties in Ohio were rather definitely committed to a support of internal improvements and the protective tariff, although the Maysville veto had caused some Democrats in Ohio to trim their views to fit the pattern set by their national leader, and National Republican leadership was probably more closely associated with the canal program in Ohio than was that of the Democrats.¹

¹ H. E. Davis, "Economic Basis of Ohio Politics," *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, XLVII, 318.

In the Democratic Party in the State there was a latent State-rights tradition, a legacy in part of earlier devotion to Jeffersonian principles. During the winter of 1832-33, however, much of the strength of this tradition disappeared. During the Webster-Hayne debates in the United States Senate in 1830 over the question of States' rights *versus* a supreme national government, the National Republican Cincinnati *Gazette* had applauded the principles of Webster rather than "the fine spun cobweb, constitutional objections, anti-tariff demonstrations, nullifying disunion resolutions and anti-internal improvement speeches of all the Barbours, and Haynes and Bentons."² On the other hand, one Jacksonian paper had termed Daniel Webster's speech "anti-republican," and a Columbus organ of the Jacksonians had claimed that Hayne's reply, "for clearness and elevated sentiment . . . without a parallel in the history of the age," had caused Webster to be "routed, and vanquished, and beaten."³ Yet, when the nullification question in South Carolina reached a crisis late in 1832 and Jackson issued his flaming proclamation against defiance of national authority, practically no sympathy for the Carolinians existed in Ohio.

Jackson's exhibition of nationalistic principles on this occasion brought forth an enthusiastic response from National Republicans and Democrats alike. Hammond declared that the address of the convention of South Carolina was "a labored effort to misrepresent the objects and effects of the system of protection" and that the issue involved not "justice or dissolution of the union" but submission peaceably to the will of the majority, or submission by compulsion.⁴ For once Moses Dawson of the Democratic Cincinnati *Advertiser* and Hammond of the National Republican Cincinnati *Gazette* were in agreement, and when the former suggested a town meeting to denounce nullification, the proposal was heartily endorsed by the latter.⁵ Some complaint was registered against the

² Cincinnati *Gazette*, Feb. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, Mar. 4, 5, 6, 8, 27, 1830.

³ St. Clairsville (Ohio) *Gazette* in St. Clairsville (Ohio) *National Historian*, Apr. 17, 1830; Columbus *Ohio State Bulletin*, Mar. 10, 24, 1830.

⁴ Cincinnati *Gazette*, Dec. 13, 1832.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Dec. 15, 1832.

inconsistency of Georgia's practical nullification of national authority with impunity in the question of the jurisdiction over the Indians in Georgia while South Carolina was forced to yield, but Jackson was universally praised.⁶ It must have startled the residents of Cincinnati to note approval of the President's position in the columns of the *Gazette*, and another editor wrote:

"It is but a rare occurrence that we give praise to the present Executive of the United States. . . . The last week, however, has introduced a new era, in which may be seen General Jackson, for the first time in his life, imitating the example of Washington; in which he may be seen no longer a stickler for state rights, but a thorough advocate of the sovereign power of the people."⁷

On the nullification question, the attitude of a large portion of Ohioans was probably expressed in the letter written during the summer of 1832 by a son of William Henry Harrison to his congressman, a family friend:

"I feel an indignation I cannot express against those who are for raising the standard of nullification, which I consider a decent term for rebellion and treason. Should the South really rebel, I *will thank you to recommend me to the President as a fit and proper person to command a Regiment* of volunteers from this part of the country. I will guarantee that in one month from the time we march, I will ride through the streets of Charleston."⁸

On December 31, the speaker of the Ohio Senate laid before that body a communication from the governor of Pennsylvania, with resolutions of the legislature of that state, regarding the South Carolina convention. Resolutions against nullification were passed without debate by the Ohio Senate, and were agreed to unanimously by the Ohio House.⁹ A local poet denounced the disunion sentiment in Carolina:

⁶ Columbus *Ohio State Journal*, Dec. 1, 1832.

⁷ *National Historian*, Dec. 22, 1832.

⁸ William Henry Harrison, Jr., to James Findlay, North Bend, July 4, 1832, Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio, *Quarterly Publications* (Cincinnati), III (1908), 76-7.

⁹ *Ohio State Journal*, Jan. 2, Feb. 25, 1833.

"Hark! from the South contending clamor rings
While Europe laughs, and prophesies again
The people o'er the people cannot reign.
Shame! Shame! that of the millions there's not any
That for their country's good would sink a penny."¹⁰

The Tariff Act of 1832 based on the protective system, was passed with the aid of the votes of both Ohio senators and every Ohio representative (except Joseph Vance who favored it but was absent).¹¹ To Ohioans no adjustment of the tariff seemed likely to "quiet in any degree the complaint of the South" which demanded "nothing short of the fatal surrender of the manufacturing policy" and the election of John C. Calhoun as President.¹² In the crisis that followed the most ardent supporters of protection opposed compromise "with the Representatives of the South merely for the purpose of pacifying a few Hotspurs."¹³ Hammond of the *Cincinnati Gazette* ridiculed the suggestion of the *Richmond Whig* that protection be abandoned to conciliate the South: "Now our friend of the *Whig* proposes that six millions of the same family shall consent to the depreciation of the value of their own labor, to propitiate three million of their brethren, whose great object is to enhance their profit upon the labor of others, whom they control as their property."¹⁴ Ohioans did not look with enthusiasm upon the proposed (Gulian Crommelin) Verplanck bill to reduce duties by one-half in two years, and at least two Ohio representatives spoke against the measure in the House. Considerable surprise, moreover, arose in Ohio when Clay offered his compromise proposition for a gradual reduction of the tariff until 1842. One newspaper which had ardently supported Clay in the previous Presidential campaign, declared that it had little thought that Clay

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Jan. 2, 1833.

¹¹ *Senate Journal*, 22 Cong., 1 Sess., 431; *House Journal*, 22 Cong., 1 Sess., 1023-4.

¹² Samuel F. Vinton to Duncan McArthur, Washington, May 9, 1832, McArthur MSS.

¹³ *National Historian*, Dec. 29, 1832.

¹⁴ *Cincinnati Gazette*, Jan. 4, 1833.

would "desert or even modify the system upon which his own reputation had been advanced," and other papers expressed similar sentiments. The State-rights Democrats, who were especially numerous in the vicinity of Zanesville, were nevertheless happy to see a reduction of duties both because of an opposition to high protection and because the employment of force against South Carolina would strengthen the tendency of the Union toward "consolidation."¹⁵

Most of the National Republicans, however, accepted the plan of their chief without complaint. Hammond proclaimed Clay "of ten-fold more usefulness than the President," and the Columbus *Ohio State Journal* explained that he had "not abandoned the American System; but on the contrary, saved it, from almost inevitable destruction." The congressman from the Chillicothe district wrote that the bill was "entirely satisfactory to the manufacturers" and that the Kentuckian stood on "higher ground" than "at any former period of his life."¹⁶ Yet, when the roll was called in Congress, Ohio was quite divided, Thomas Ewing voting affirmatively and Benjamin Ruggles negatively in the Senate, while party lines were disregarded in the House when seven congressmen voted for the compromise and six against it, with Vance absent.¹⁷ No serious objection was heard in Ohio to the "Force Bill" to strengthen the arm of the Federal Government in the crisis, and when the vote was taken both Ohio senators and the whole Ohio delegation in the House voted for the bill, except Stanbery, who voted in opposition, and two who did not vote.¹⁸ Ohio seemed well pleased that compromise had ended the difficulty. John Bailhache, editor of the *Ohio State Journal* and a correspondent of Clay, declared:

"We should have been sorry to see the enforcing bill pass into

¹⁵ *National Historian*, Feb. 9, 23, 1833; James Thompson to John McLean, Zanesville, Jan. 4, 22, Mar. 6, 1833, McLean MSS.

¹⁶ William Creighton, Jr., to McArthur, Washington, Mar. 1, 1833, McArthur MSS.

¹⁷ *Sen. Jour.*, 22 Cong., 2 Sess., 224; *House Jour.*, 22 Cong., 2 Sess., 429.

¹⁸ *Sen. Jour.*, 22 Cong., 2 Sess., 198; *House Jour.*, 22 Cong., 2 Sess., 653-4.

a law without being accompanied by another effort, worthy of a government proud of its strength, for the removal of the existing difficulty." He felt, moreover, that the compromise ought to be universally popular: (1) to the great body of Administration men, because Jackson had signed it; (2) to advocates of free trade, because of gradual reductions; (3) to nullifiers, because it afforded them a pretext for abandoning their "anarchical notions."¹⁹

The veto of the Bank bill by Jackson in 1832, made the banking question a leading issue in the State. The matter had hitherto been of relatively little concern to the State legislature. An act of February 5, 1825, had required each bank in Ohio to pay a tax of two per cent. on all dividends declared previous to the passage of the act, and one of four per cent. on all dividends subsequently earned, but no further change had been made in the Ohio banking laws until 1831, when the tax rate was increased to five per cent. In the meantime, however, new banks had been chartered. In 1826 there were ten banks, whose notes were current throughout the State. In 1829, the Bank of Geauga and the Commercial Bank of Cincinnati were chartered, though the latter did not commence business until 1831, when the Bank of Norwalk was created and an inactive bank at Dayton was revived. In 1832, one bank was chartered at Zanesville, and the defunct Commercial Bank of the same city renewed operations.²⁰

Governor Duncan McArthur, in running unsuccessfully for Congress in the fall of 1832, had urged as an alternative to a United States bank, a State bank, which should not be a Treasury bank but one which would make unnecessary the chartering of a host of local banks.²¹ Such a project was discussed widely during the fall and winter and was considered in the governor's message of December 4, 1832. A week later a meeting favorable to the proposal was held in Cincinnati, and Charles Hammond reported

¹⁹ *Ohio State Journal*, Mar. 23, 30, 1833.

²⁰ C. C. Huntington, "History of Banking and Currency in Ohio before the Civil War," *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, XXIV, 113-6, 120, 133.

²¹ Printed circular, Sept. 12, 1832, McArthur MSS.

that the incoming governor (Robert Lucas), hitherto opposed to banks, seemed to favor it. The Ohio Senate considered the chartering of a State bank, to be financed by the borrowing of \$7,000,000 on the credit of the State. The Senate Committee on Finance reported that the banking capital of local banks in Ohio was about \$2,000,000, which was a fourth or a fifth the amount needed. It recommended a State bank in which the State should own one-fifth of the stock and appoint the same proportion of the directors.²² Although a bank of this type could probably borrow money from abroad at less interest than private banks, a writer in the *Ohio State Journal* denounced it as "a grand scheme of speculation," and a meeting of citizens of Clark County pictured it as endangering "the purity, if not the safety of our political institutions."²³

In all, three different plans for the proposed State bank were presented to the legislature, but none was adopted. It appeared that a majority was against a State bank of any description, and all sorts of criticism were expressed. Those personally interested in additional local banks may have been responsible for the failure of the proposals.

The immediate solution for the problem of additional capital was the doubling of the stock of the Commercial Bank of Cincinnati (from \$500,000) and the granting of a charter to the Franklin Bank of Cincinnati (with \$1,000,000 capitalization). This action was deemed necessary because of the curtailment of the business of the United States Branch Bank at that place, though some believed that the increase in capitalization of the Commercial Bank would have sufficed.²⁴

The period from 1831 to 1837, and especially from 1834 to 1837, was one of tremendous growth in agriculture, manufacturing, and population, thus stimulating a demand for an increase in the circulating medium. Prices were good and trade was brisk, but the lack of money proved a serious impediment. The East was passing

²² Cincinnati Gazette, Jan. 3, 1833; *Ohio State Journal*, Jan. 9, 1833.

²³ *Ibid.*, Jan. 9, 26, March 2, 1833.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, March 2, 1833.

through a period of financial readjustment, partly because of Jackson's policies; and it proved difficult in Ohio to secure exchange with the New York banks.²⁵ The new policy of the United States Branch Bank, in view of the probable close of its career in 1836, and the removal of Government deposits from the Bank, seriously affected the financial situation in Ohio, and especially in Cincinnati.²⁶ In May, George W. Jones, agent of the Branch Bank at Cincinnati had received instructions that, where the obligation was fully secured by mortgage and the interest was paid, the debtor was not to be pressed for payment, but where the mortgage was insufficient to cover the obligation, a foreclosure was to be made.²⁷

When Jackson read his famous paper to his cabinet on September 18, 1833, that the Bank must positively be closed in April, 1836, Hammond commented that the result would be that the people of Cincinnati would have to pay to the Bank \$2,200,000 in discounts and liquidate a large credit, based upon bills of exchange, within two and a half years. Even if done gradually, he explained such a financial readjustment could not but produce a severe strain.²⁸ The subsequent removal of deposits from the United States Bank aroused the strongest opposition among the National Republicans, who predicted that next to cholera and yellow fever, this was the greatest affliction of the West. "National bankruptcy and individual ruin" were predicted unless Congress checked "the improvident course" of the Administration.²⁹

It was not long before hardships appeared. Hammond argued that the only solution was a recharter of the United States Bank. The Cleveland *Herald* favored a State project. Meetings, asking for the return of deposits to the United States Bank, were held at Cincinnati, Gallipolis, Springfield, and a dozen other cities.³⁰ The call

²⁵ Huntington, "Banking and Currency in Ohio," 139; Cincinnati *Gazette*, Nov. 5, 1833.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, Sept. 11, 1833.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, Sept. 21, 1833.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, Sept. 30, 1833.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, Oct. 5, 1833.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, Mar. 8, 22, Apr. 5, 12, 26, 1834; Cleveland *Herald*, Mar. 8, 22, 1834.

for one of the Cincinnati meetings was said to have been signed by over 900 persons. With supposedly the largest crowd assembled in Cincinnati since the visit of Lafayette in 1825, in attendance, adjournment from the Hamilton County Court-house to the Market House became necessary. This meeting recommended the continuance of the United States Bank with such modifications as experience had proved necessary, and sent a petition signed by 4,310 persons to Washington.³¹ This memorial, together with one signed by a thousand citizens of Franklin County was presented to the United States Senate, April 11, 1834, by Ewing, Whig senator from the State.³² Ohioans had written him of their distress. A correspondent from Steubenville pointed out that wheat had dropped from 75 cents to 37½ cents in a few months, due to the destruction of credit by the measures of the Administration. Another wrote from Mt. Vernon that it was impossible to sell the usual quantities of pork without actual loss, that wheat had fallen to 40 cents a bushel in that vicinity, and that merchants were pressing collections which compelled local traders to call in their debts.³³ The eastern press recorded that wheat was selling for 37½ cents in Batavia and for 44 cents in Zanesville.³⁴

Ewing used the occasion of the presentation of these memorials to describe the situation in his State in a speech before the United States Senate.

A report from Cincinnati asserted: "The brokers hold the destinies of the Ohio State banks in their hands. . . . If something be not done immediately ⅔ of the State Banks must stop; . . . the country is rushing in, for specie, hourly. . . . Flour fell in one day \$1.25 per barrel, . . . lard ¼ cent per pound; this last item alone will I fear ruin many enterprising men."³⁵ A traveler, after visiting leading cities from Baltimore westward, wrote that commercial

³¹ *Cincinnati Gazette*, Feb. 25, 1834.

³² *Sen. Jour.*, 23 Cong., 1 Sess., 220-1.

³³ Daniel L. Collier to Thomas Ewing, Steubenville, Feb. 27, 1834; Henry G. Curtis to *id.*, Mt. Vernon, Apr. 6, 1834, Ewing MSS.

³⁴ *Ohio State Journal*, Apr. 26, 1834.

³⁵ Morgan Neville to McLean, Cincinnati, Feb. 14, 1834, McLean MSS.

despondency was greatest at Cincinnati. Here Jacksonians had been induced to approve a plan for the rechartering of the Bank, for they dreaded a bad paper money system and had no confidence in the proposal of a specie currency.³⁶ Even Dawson, usually an ardent Democrat, admitted that some "superficial" friends of the party were falling away on the ground that a new bank ought to be established and that some of the tried and true Democrats had become fearful that without a bank, the commercial interests would experience difficulties. The future of the currency was arousing anxiety, and Dawson wondered if Treasury notes issued to the amount of a year's revenue, and paid out for the expenses of government and receivable for government dues, would not meet the need.³⁷ Another Jacksonian politician wrote that every financial "vexation and embarrassment" was being attributed to the "*President and his advisers*," and that the Democrats in Cincinnati were indeed "in a gloomy condition," forced to admit that the opposition in the city could beat them by 900 or 1,000 votes.³⁸ In the House of Representatives, Robert Lytle, member of Congress from the Cincinnati district, had presented the memorial of the January meeting at Cincinnati, asking for a restoration of deposits to the United States Bank. He asserted, however, that the petition represented the views of only a meager minority of his constituents and that the majority supported him in his opposition to the Bank. In the fall election, Lytle was defeated for reelection, although a man "of decided talent, and popular appearance and manner," and apparently his stand on the Bank question was responsible.³⁹

Important as Cincinnati was, it was not all of Ohio. The meetings of protest in favor of the Bank and against the removal of

³⁶ Jacob Barker to Martin Van Buren, Steamboat between Louisville and New Orleans, Feb. 25, 1834, Van Buren MSS.

³⁷ Moses Dawson to James K. Polk, Cincinnati, Feb. 17, 1834, Polk MSS. (in Library of Congress).

³⁸ C. B. Gardiner to William Berkeley Lewis, Lebanon, March 24, 1834, Van Buren MSS.

³⁹ Cincinnati Gazette, Feb. 11, Oct. 28, 1834; E. D. Mansfield, *Personal Memoirs, Social, Political and Literary, 1803-1843* (Cincinnati, 1879), 165.

deposits were held in the commercial centers. When, in the fall of 1833, Jackson had taken definite action to secure the removal of deposits, a Democratic politician and editor of Columbus had written:

"Ohio will stand by you on your *second veto*. Your determination for the removal of the deposits, has given a death blow to the *Bank*. If there were any doubt before as to its *recharter*, it now no longer exists. In no quarter of the Union will you be more nobly sustained in this measure."⁴⁰ As the months went by, popular opinion in Ohio was not disposed to quarrel with the President on his financial policy, except in a few important cities. Hammond complained that the Bank was a "heavy weight to carry and keep with it popular sentiment. The right of the matter is one thing. But we know *right* has no peculiar claim or recommendation to public regard."⁴¹

So far as the elections of 1833 in Ohio were an indication of the trend of public sentiment, the Democratic forces seemed stronger than ever, with a majority of four in the Senate and twenty-two in the House, an increased majority on a joint ballot of about fourteen over the triumphal results of 1832.⁴² But, the really critical situation as to finance and commerce did not develop until January, 1834.

The new legislature sustained the President. A resolution against rechartering the Bank and sustaining the removal of public deposits was adopted in the State Senate on December 26, by a vote of 20:16, only one Jacksonian voting against it. The House took similar action by a vote of 42:33. In Congress, twelve Ohioans in the House voted affirmatively and seven negatively on a resolution that the public deposits ought not to be restored.⁴³

United States Senator Thomas Morris, a Democrat from Brown

⁴⁰ John A. Bryan to Andrew Jackson, Columbus, Oct. 13, 1833, Jackson MSS.

⁴¹ Charles Hammond to Ewing, Cincinnati, Mar. 27, 1834, Ewing MSS.

⁴² Ravenna (Ohio) *Western Courier*, Oct. 31, 1833; Columbus (Ohio) *Sentinel*, Oct. 25, 1832.

⁴³ *Ohio State Journal*, Jan. 1, 4, 1834; *Niles' Register* (Baltimore, etc.), XLV (1834), 371; XLVI (1834), 106.

County, who had succeeded the National Republican Benjamin Ruggles in March, 1833, believed that never had "any curse fallen on this Republic equal to the Bank," but he feared that if a Presidential election had been held in January, 1834, under the existing "excited state of feeling" the Bank might have been sustained. He, therefore, rejoiced at the "prudence and foresight" of the President who had brought about a removal of Government deposits in time that the people might "examine, and reflect, and judge" so as to discover "the dangerous power of the Bank."⁴⁴ Lucas, in his message of December 3, 1833, had mentioned several causes for the deficiency in a circulating medium, one being the completion of the expenditure by the State of about \$5,000,000 for canal-building. The withdrawal of so large a sum from the channels of trade due to the termination of the work, he believed, had severely affected the community, and he again urged a State bank as a remedy.

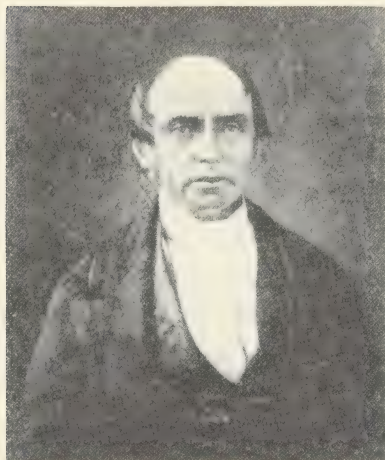
There were two plans for the chartering of such a State bank. One would have provided for capital stock consisting of State funds only (*e.g.*, taxes collected and tolls from canals), the faith of the State to be pledged for the notes of the bank. Opponents of this plan preferred a bank based upon a real property basis. The result was that on January 20, the Senate indefinitely postponed the bill. Both Lucas and the Democratic Central Committee had strongly advocated a State bank, but the friends of the United States Bank, and those of existing local banks, together with some hopeful applicants for new banks, used their influence with success.⁴⁵ The agitation for local banks was especially strong early in 1834. In contrast to sixteen applications for bank charters the previous year and eight applications two years before, at this session nearly thirty petitions were received. As a result, ten new banks were established and two banks formerly chartered but no longer engaged in business, were revived.⁴⁶ In the case of one of

⁴⁴ Thomas Morris to Jonathan D. Morris, Washington, Jan. 1, 1834; *id.* to *id.*, Jan. 20, 1834, in B. F. Morris, *Life of Thomas Morris* (Cincinnati, 1856), 351, 354.

⁴⁵ *Western Courier*, Jan. 23, 1834; *Cincinnati Gazette*, Jan. 4, 7, 1834.

⁴⁶ *Ohio State Journal*, March 3, 1834.

the banks created at that time, the Clinton Bank of Columbus, it was charged that the agents who had lobbied it into existence had "covertly and hypocritically stifled the State Bank"; and that the directory of that bank contained four United States office-holders and two State officers.⁴⁷



29. NICHOLAS LONGWORTH
(1782-1863)

A leading Ohio capitalist, horticulturist, and patron of the arts. From Charles Cist, *Cincinnati in 1851* (Cincinnati, 1851), facing p. 325.

By the end of 1833, the National Republican Party had clearly demonstrated its impotence in rallying political support throughout the Nation. The year 1834, accordingly, witnessed the emergence of a new political coalition known as the Whig Party. In Ohio, as elsewhere in the country, the core of the new organization was made up of erstwhile National Republicans. The leadership was on the whole vested in men of property or those associated intimately with propertied interests. It included in

Cincinnati such men as Jacob Burnet, Nicholas Longworth, and Bellamy Storer; in the Scioto Valley such wealthy investors as Alfred Kelley and Duncan McArthur; in the Hocking country such a pioneer coal operator as Thomas Ewing who was associated during the period with Samuel F. Vinton; on the Western Reserve such lawyers and bankers as Edward Wade, Benjamin F. Wade, Joshua R. Giddings, Elisha Whittlesey, and Simon Perkins.⁴⁸ Such men, when actively participating in political life, sometimes took pains to conceal their economic attachments. Thus, in 1833, when Congressman Samuel F. Vinton obtained fifty shares in the newly organized Franklin Bank of Cincinnati, only twenty of them were

⁴⁷ *Cincinnati Gazette*, Jan. 29, 1834.

⁴⁸ Davis, "Economic Basis," 297, 313, 316.

recorded in his own name, twenty being taken out in the name of his friend, Charles Damarin, and ten in the name of another.⁴⁹ The leaders of the old National Republicans in Ohio hoped to rally under the Whig banner others who had previously followed the antimasonic frenzy or had deserted the Democratic Party because of a dissatisfaction with Jackson and his principles. In Ohio, as elsewhere, some were irritated by the high-handed methods of the Chief Executive; others had disagreed with his views on internal improvements, the Bank, or Clay's plan for the distribution among the States of the revenue from the sale of public lands. A few State-rights men were disgruntled by the intensity of Jackson's nationalism. If these various elements could be united, success might be ahead for the Whigs in the years to come.

By the early part of Jackson's second term it was evident that Martin Van Buren would be the Democratic candidate to succeed the President in 1836. The "heir apparent," however, was not a westerner and did not elicit in Ohio the enthusiasm which Jackson had aroused. Whigs felt encouraged and in Ohio, the friends of John McLean tried to secure adequate newspaper support for their favorite.⁵⁰ George Kesling, a native of Virginia, who had located in McLean's home county (Warren) as early as 1797 and had become a member of the legislature, a judge of the common pleas court, and postmaster at Lebanon under McLean's direction of the Post-office Department, attempted to secure control of the *Columbus Sentinel* from John A. Bryan. The latter had been elected State auditor and was desirous of disposing of the paper. The price demanded (\$1,600) seemed rather high, but the desired control was obtained, as well as an option on the *Ohio Argus* published at Lebanon.⁵¹ Kesling was skeptical of his ability to edit an important

⁴⁹ Vinton to William Greene, near Gallipolis, Apr. 3, 1833, Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio, *Quarterly Publications*, XIV (1919), pt. 1, p. 5.

⁵⁰ Much of the material in the remainder of this chapter has appeared, in somewhat different form, in F. P. Weisenburger, *Life of John McLean* (Columbus, 1937), 81ff.

⁵¹ William Miner to McLean, Columbus, Feb. 10, 1833; George Kesling to *id.*, March 16, 1833, McLean MSS.

newspaper at Columbus and would have preferred to have devoted his efforts to the *Argus*, of which, when published under the name of the *American Democrat* he had been the editor. Nevertheless, he edited the *Sentinel* until the summer of 1834, in the interests of McLean. Van Buren men in the State endeavored to injure it by branding it as an anti-Democratic paper.⁵² At Hamilton, in the county directly west of the home of McLean's youthful years, the *Western Telegraph* which in 1829 had been enthusiastically for the justice now spoke sympathetically of his possible candidacy mentioning him for the Presidency with Van Buren as his running mate. The editor, Taylor Webster, however, wrote to McLean during the summer of 1833, and refused to commit himself until after the fall elections of 1834. Taylor was a native of Pennsylvania who had come to Ohio in 1806, had served as clerk of the Ohio legislature in 1829 and as speaker in 1830, and was editor of the *Telegraph* from 1824 to 1836. Elected to Congress in 1832 he was an odd mixture of naïveté and canniness. Before assuming his new office he wrote to McLean that he was sensible of his incapacity and added, "but I was elected by a people who well knew me, and do not entertain high hopes." As to his knowledge of the country whose laws he was to help enact, he admitted: "I am young in years, but younger in travel. I have never been farther from this place than Columbus. I have heard something of the eastern countries."⁵³ McLean apparently hoped for the assistance of this rustic congressman for his political ambitions, and wrote to friends in Washington to see that proper attention was given to him.⁵⁴ The justice, however, was destined to be disappointed, and Webster's newspaper showed less enthusiasm for McLean as time went on, possibly due to a fear that the patronage of the Government would be withdrawn from it.

The other Hamilton paper, the *Intelligencer*, early in 1833 in-

⁵² Columbus *Sentinel*, Sept. 12, 1833, June 25, 1834; Miner to McLean, Oct. 7, 1833, McLean MSS.

⁵³ To McLean, Hamilton, Dec. 8, 1832; *id.* to *id.*, Hamilton, Aug. 28, 1833, McLean MSS.

⁵⁴ McLean to Elisha Whittlesey, Frankfort, Nov. 15, 1833, Whittlesey MSS.

licated a strong preference for McLean, though its editor, Lewis D. Campbell (later a leader in the national Congress), wrote pointedly to Van Buren, soliciting financial assistance:

"I have not yet committed myself upon the question of the next Presidency, and wish to know if I should espouse your cause, whether you would render me any pecuniary assistance. The citizens at this time are somewhat biassed in favor of McLean, but by laboring at this early period much could be effected in your favor."⁵⁵ Van Buren, however, replied that it was against his rule to assist such a venture in a pecuniary way and that "public considerations" should be the only factor in determining the newspaper man's attitude.⁵⁶ The *Intelligencer* thereafter became a strong and influential supporter of the justice.

In Cincinnati during 1833 the newspapers were as yet uncommitted on the Presidency except that Dawson of the *Advertiser* seemed safe in the Van Buren camp. McLean's friends attempted to influence Dawson and the proprietors of the Cincinnati *National Republican*, but a secret reorganization of the latter paper was brought about, and the editor, James Allen, was persuaded to adhere to Van Buren.⁵⁷ The Cincinnati *Commercial Advertiser*, renamed the *Democratic Intelligencer and Commercial Advertiser*, came out in March, 1834, for McLean. The Cincinnati *Gazette* believed that any considerable support from the Jacksonians for McLean might well be aided by additional backing from the Whigs, but only if success could be attained without a House election. At that time, however, Hammond's tendency toward insobriety made editorial support from him somewhat uncertain at best.⁵⁸

For a time following the Democratic victory of 1832 and especially after the President's proclamation against nullification, the opposition remained quiet. To many former supporters of Clay,

⁵⁵ Lewis Davis Campbell to Van Buren, Hamilton, Sept. 9, 1833, Van Buren MSS.

⁵⁶ Van Buren to Campbell, New York, Oct. 6, 1833, *ibid.*

⁵⁷ William S. Hatch to Van Buren, Cincinnati, July 22, 1833, Van Buren MSS.

⁵⁸ J. Taylor to McLean, Cincinnati, Nov. 4, 1833; George Graham to *id.*, Cincinnati, Nov. 14, 1833, McLean MSS.

the Kentuckian's political prospects seemed "utterly prostrate." Even ex-Senator Jacob Burnet thought that in view of the nullification controversy it had been fortunate that Jackson rather than Henry Clay had been elected in 1832.⁵⁹ Webster had little support west of the mountains except among persons of New England descent. Hence, McLean and his friends considered the times not unfavorable for the advancement of their candidate. Conceivably, but improbably, the justice from Ohio might be nominated by the Democrats; not so unlikely was a possible nomination by the disgruntled elements of both parties against the regular candidates of the major parties. The brightest hope of the McLean followers, however, was to gain the adherence of a substantial group of dissatisfied Democrats, and by using this support as a means of encouraging the old National Republicans, to prompt them to rally to McLean's support.

Late in 1833, Ohio supporters of McLean were encouraged by demonstrations in his favor outside the State—by a group of workingmen in Baltimore, by individual expressions on the part of Antimasons in New York, and by local meetings in Tennessee.⁶⁰ Hammond considered the time was ripe to test McLean's strength in Ohio. He scouted the notion expressed by the *Ravenna Western Courier* that McLean's views on important issues were not known, and proceeded to explain them. The Cincinnati editor suggested that the movement in the justice's favor should originate in Butler County, where there was a large number of Democrats who favored McLean, and where the Hamilton *Intelligencer*, conducted by John Woods (who had studied law under McLean) and by Lewis D. Campbell (who had been rebuffed by Van Buren) was ready to come out in his favor. The justice, however, preferred that the first meeting in Ohio be held in his old home county—Warren—and his wishes were respected. The meeting, called for Lebanon, December 14, provided for the appointment of a committee of correspondence of twenty members.

⁵⁹ William Taylor Barry to Van Buren, Cincinnati, July 7, 1833, Van Buren MSS.

⁶⁰ Weisenburger, *McLean*, 83-5.

Two days later at Cincinnati, a call, signed by over two hundred persons, and published by one Democratic paper, the *Advertiser*, but refused by the *National Republican*, resulted in a large meeting which endorsed McLean and empowered the chairman to appoint a correspondence committee in his behalf. Similar meetings were held at St. Clairsville, Mansfield, Eaton, Hamilton, and Jefferson. Burnet wrote that, among the numerous National Republicans and disaffected Jacksonians with whom he had conversed, nine-tenths were for McLean. Jubilantly he exclaimed to a friend, "You may be as certain as you can be of anything future, that he will be the next president if he lives."⁶¹

Leading Democratic politicians and office-holders under the Jackson Administration, however, were watchful of Van Buren's interests in Ohio. The Democratic State Central Committee, which had ceased functioning after the elections of 1832, was revived and prepared for a Jackson Day State Convention in January, 1834. The McLean press tried to have it postponed until spring or summer, but the rising movement for the justice prompted Van Buren's friends in Cincinnati to plan a meeting on December 14, 1833, in the Hamilton County Court-house. A call was issued for a State convention on January 8, to select delegates to a national Democratic convention friendly to Van Buren. An endeavor to have this call approved by the State legislature was rejected by both houses. The convention was attended largely by office-holders.

The fall elections of 1834 seemed to McLean's friends to be a favorable time for the initial test in Ohio of the strength of the developing Whig organization. Late in 1833, efforts were made to secure the active assistance of James Findlay, a pioneer resident of Cincinnati who was widely known throughout southwestern Ohio. A native of Cumberland, Pennsylvania, he had settled in Cincinnati as a young man, had become a member of the Council of the Northwest Territory during the second stage of its Territorial organization, had acted as receiver of public monies in Cincinnati

⁶¹ Jacob Burnet to James Heaton, Cincinnati, April 19, 1834, Heaton MSS.

in 1800, had served as mayor of Cincinnati, and had been actively associated with numerous business and cultural pursuits. His services in the militia at the time of the Burr conspiracy and his active participation in the War of 1812 made the title of "General," by which he was commonly designated, definitely more than an honorary one. As a congressman from 1825 to 1833 he had followed the Jackson leadership. He was defeated for reelection in 1832. McLean's friends hoped to induce him to head the State ticket in 1834. Early in November, 1833, while Findlay was in Dayton, he was invited to assume leadership of the movement. At first non-committal, he served as chairman of the McLean meeting at Cincinnati in December. On February 7, 1834, McLean personally wrote to him asking him not to decline the nomination for the governorship that would be tendered him. McLean, as a Supreme Court justice, received flattering comments as to his political prospects from correspondents, many of whom were former postmasters or members of the bar, and he felt confident of success.⁶² On Washington's Birthday local meetings of State-rights Democrats at Zanesville and St. Clairsville endorsed Findlay, and later a McLean committee in Cincinnati and Whig meetings at Springfield and Dayton took similar action. Some Whigs, however, preferred Joseph Vance of Urbana, longtime congressman and political associate of Clay. Among these Vance supporters was the editor of the *Ohio State Journal* who objected that Findlay had been an active leader among the Democrats and now represented only those dissatisfied persons who were drifting into the new Whig Party. Vance, however, declined to be a candidate, and the contest was between Findlay and Lucas, who had been renominated by the regular Democrats.

Findlay was not a back-slapping politician. On the contrary, he was rather austere, though with friends he could be jovial and hospitable. His character was irreproachable, and James Heaton, a prominent anti-Jackson politician of the Miami Valley, wrote:

⁶² Letter of Feb. 7, 1834, in Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio, *Quarterly Publications*, I (1906), 91.

"I confess I am much pleased that General Findlay is spoken of as Governor because although his course has not been such as *we* [former National Republicans] in all things could approve, yet, he is a decent man, he can enter a room, address, and sit down decently, and is naturally pleasant. . . . [He has] nothing of a Robespierrean cast about him, [is] naturally conciliatory, and if he should commit an error, would endeavor to repair it. . . ." ⁶³

Findlay was represented as the enemy of land speculators, and the champion of the tariff and internal improvements. Some Democrats charged that both McLean and Findlay were being utilized by the United States Bank in an effort to divide the Democrats of Ohio, and the *Cleveland Advertiser* changed from an anti-Jackson to a pro-Van Buren paper, explaining that Findlay had been taken up by the Whigs solely because of his devotion to the Bank. ⁶⁴ In northern Ohio the allegation was circulated that Findlay was a Roman Catholic, but his friends explained that he had been throughout his life an attendant, though not a member, of the Presbyterian church. During the summer some discouraging reports came from northern Ohio as to Findlay's prospects, but other observations indicated that Findlay had wide support from the anti-Jacksonians especially in southwestern Ohio and on the Western Reserve. One candid commentator, however, noted that those politicians who were secretly opposed to Van Buren were unwilling to risk their personal prospects by openly opposing the Democratic ticket in Ohio.

When the election returns were computed in October it was found that Findlay had lost the State by 3,324 votes. His former Democratic affiliations had contributed to lukewarm support for him in northern Ohio, where he was not well known. He carried Muskingum County, where anti-Van Buren sentiment was strong, by about 1,300 votes, but in the State as a whole he apparently lost more votes from the old National Republicans than he gained from discontented Democrats. In particular, the Western Reserve

⁶³ Heaton to Burnet, Middletown, Feb. 24, 1834, Heaton MSS.

⁶⁴ *Cleveland Herald*, Jan. 25, 1834; *Cleveland Advertiser*, Sept. 4, 25, 1834.

gave him a favorable margin of less than three thousand votes instead of the five thousand or more that had been expected. Lucas was an experienced officer of tested ability and great personal popularity, and Findlay belonged to a family which was frequently considered as one whose "ambition in grasping after office was unbounded." Hence, Findlay actually ran behind the rest of the Whig ticket and failed to carry his own county of Hamilton. Yet, Lucas' majority (of about 8,000 votes in 1832) was reduced to about 3,300 in 1834, and a Democratic majority of about twenty-four on joint resolution in the legislature was changed to a Whig majority of approximately fourteen. In 1832 the Democrats had succeeded in eleven out of nineteen congressional districts in Ohio, but in 1834 they captured only nine of the seats. Jackson himself eagerly watched the results of the congressional elections in Ohio, for the party control of the delegation was at stake, and the final outcome would determine the vote of Ohio in case the election of a President should go to the House in 1836.⁶⁵

The defeat of Findlay proved a stunning blow to the McLean movement. One of McLean's supporters had expressed the common belief that Findlay's election would mean the right to claim the State for the justice. Yet, McLean men found solace in the situation, for the Whig control of the legislature and of the Ohio congressional delegation seemed to show that Van Buren lacked genuine popularity in the State. Disconcerting, however, was the widespread feeling that a major cause for Findlay's defeat had been that some friends of Clay were unwilling to support anyone whose success would detract from Clay's future prospects.⁶⁶ Nevertheless, the Ohio legislature might endorse McLean, and this might induce similar declarations in other states. The election of presiding officers of both houses favorable to the justice would, of course, be significant. Charles Anthony of Springfield and John M. Creed of Lancaster were the most satisfactory persons in the upper and lower chambers for this purpose. Columbus was "filled with Mc-

⁶⁵ Jackson to Van Buren, Oct. 27, 1834, Van Buren MSS.

⁶⁶ Thomas Scott to McLean, Chillicothe, Sept. 23, 1834, McLean MSS.

Lean's leading adherents from all parts of the state," with McLean coming in person to stimulate developments. To one Democratic politician, who met the justice each day at dinner, he seemed "to be pondering deeply on the need for yielding" his judicial position for the prospect of the more exalted station.⁶⁷

A paper of endorsement was put in circulation in rather secretive fashion, it being hoped that a majority of the members of the legislature and others in attendance at the Federal court would affix their signatures. Peter Hitchcock, a Connecticut Yankee and a pioneer settler at Burton on the Western Reserve, who was a distinguished lawyer and a former colleague of McLean's on the Ohio Supreme Court, was the first to sign the endorsement. But a number of Whigs decided that the matter should be postponed until early in January. McLean, however, possessed above all other qualities a dogged determination, and there were numerous lawyers and legislators who probably did not wish to brook the personal hostility of this ambitious judge who presided over the Federal Circuit Court at Columbus. At any rate, McLean's friends continued to gather signatures, and before the end of the month, the address of the "Democratic Republican" members of the legislature and others who were in Columbus for the sessions of the circuit court, was made public. It recommended McLean for the Presidency and expressed appreciation of the "many difficulties in effecting the Union" of opinion but also the hope "that the desire to preserve the great principles of civil liberty, periled by the mournful progression of executive power" would triumph over personal and geographical considerations. Fifty-seven members of the legislature and thirty-two additional leaders of public opinion signed the recommendation.

The new-born Presidential boom proved feeble. The few active McLean newspapers were almost vociferous in their praise, but most Whig papers were, at best, mild in approval or non-committal. A Harrison movement was at once launched in Hamilton County, and Webster was aroused to write:

⁶⁷ David T. Disney to Van Buren, Dec. 18, 1834, Van Buren MSS.

"Mr. McLean's nomination appears to take but little. It is coldly received, even in Ohio, so much so, indeed, that Genl. Harrison's friends are holding meetings in that State, for the purpose of bringing *him* forward. Letters recd. to-day, from Columbus and Cincinnati, asked urgently what is doing or to be done in Mass[achusetts]." ⁶⁸

A cardinal weakness of the Whig organization was its large number of ambitious leaders and its diverse, even incongruous elements. One of McLean's friends wrote to him from Cincinnati, "Our Whig party is made up of such a 'mixed multitude of discordant materials' that it is enough to sicken anyone of having aught to do with it." ⁶⁹ Organization, however, was necessary to any success whatsoever, and by August a Whig Committee of General Correspondence for Ohio had been formed.

By that time, however, McLean's prospects had seriously declined. George Kesling, a month earlier, had observed sadly: "It is becoming very visable [*sic*] to me that even those who have been loud in their professions have recently shown evidence to me that they never were real in their pretensions. Yet I shall continue to coax and flatter them for a time longer." ⁷⁰ Now, in August, completely downcast, he expressed the belief that if the darkest hour were, in reality, before the dawn, progress toward union ought to be expected at once. ⁷¹ Hence, few were probably surprised when McLean wrote to Moses H. Kirby of the Ohio Central Correspondence Committee, from Richland, Ohio, August 31, that he did not wish the Presidency to be decided by the House of Representatives, and that "from the number of candidates in the field, it is not probable that this ground can be changed,—necessarily, on the principles I have avowed, [this] excludes me from the list of candidates." ⁷²

McLean's personality was hardly of the type to attract enthu-

⁶⁸ Daniel Webster to Jeremiah Mason, Jan. 22, 1835, Webster MSS.

⁶⁹ Andrew Lane to McLean, Jan. 31, 1835, McLean MSS.

⁷⁰ George Kesling to *id.*, Lebanon, July 8, 1835, *ibid.*

⁷¹ *Id.* to *id.*, Aug. 17, 1835, *ibid.*

⁷² *Ohio State Journal*, Sept. 18, 1835.

siasm during a period of colorful personalities, some of whom had military reputations. McLean was austere, and his work as an administrator or judge was not the type of service to the country that is apt to stimulate popular demonstrations. His position on the Supreme Bench was, in fact, a handicap, for even then a wide-spread idea prevailed that the arbiters of justice should be aloof from political activity.⁷³ The Bank question, moreover, proved embarrassing to him. Ohio Whigs were not united on this issue. Some disclaimed any connection between party loyalty and advocacy of a recharter for the Bank, and certain State-rights Democrats endorsed McLean for President while specifically approving Jackson's veto of the Bank. Many Whigs, on the other hand, were ardent supporters of the potent financial institution, and in Cincinnati some conservative Democrats had abjured their connection with the Jacksonians after the Bank veto. When such persons were told that McLean was not against a bank "with modifications," they demanded a definite commitment. Due to the activities of his political enemies, much discussion developed as to the justice' actual views, and he was denounced both as a supporter and an opponent of a national bank. Another reason for the failure to arouse more support for McLean in his home State was the fact that editors and politicians knew the advantage of cultivating the favor of an administration which had the power to bestow profitable offices and other emoluments, and Jackson wanted Van Buren.

Perhaps the most important deterrent to the development of McLean strength in Ohio, however, was the tenacity with which some of the Whigs continued to cling to Clay as a Presidential possibility. Congressman Elisha Whittlesey had written in September, 1833, to Webster:

"I never had very confident hopes we should carry Mr. Clay against Gen. Jackson [in 1832], but I saw then, and I now say Judge McLean with anything like an honorable support from Mr. Clay's friends would have been elected against Gen. Jackson at

⁷³ Walter B. Beebe to Ewing, Cadiz, Apr. 10, 1834, Ewing MSS.

the last election. With this support he can beat Mr. Van Buren. On all the great questions for which we have contended, I have no doubt of his being orthodox. I am not about to eulogize him, and I will only say he has never been placed in any office, where he has not met the reasonable expectation of the public. If elected he will be the President of the whole people, and not of a party."⁷⁴

A few of Clay's Ohio friends insisted on clinging to the Kentuckian "with a deathlike grasp," and Clay himself had not discouraged such devotion. As late as July, 1835, John Bailhache, Whig editor of the *Ohio State Journal*, believed that the great body of Whigs were as yet uncommitted, and as strong as ever in their attachment to Clay, and that it would be impossible for any other member of the party to succeed. He urged Clay to allow the report that he would not be a candidate to be contradicted.⁷⁵ Clay replied with considerable bitterness, stating that he felt that the action of the members of the Ohio legislature in approving of McLean had been "highly injurious" to his (Clay's) prospects. He elaborated, "Ohio had been considered as a State which (Jackson out of the way) would certainly bestow her suffrage on me, if I were a candidate." He considered it unwise to favor "an original friend of Jackson in preference to all who had been uniform in opposition to him," a policy overemphasizing the support hoped for from the Jackson ranks and underestimating the loss from Whig aversion or apathy. He recalled that he had stated that he would only be a candidate if there were strong reason to believe that he would not again be defeated, and he expressed the opinion that such a situation did not exist.⁷⁶

Thus, Clay, like McLean, had been eliminated from the possibilities for leadership of the Whig Presidential ticket in Ohio in 1836, but the unavoidable question of a suitable standard-bearer for that year still remained unanswered.

⁷⁴ Whittlesey to Webster, Canfield, Sept. 14, 1833, Webster MSS.

⁷⁵ John W. Bailhache to Henry Clay, Columbus, July 8, 1835, Clay MSS.

⁷⁶ Clay to [?], Ashland, July 14, 1835, Henry Clay, *Works*, ed. by Calvin Colton (New York, 1904), V, 394-5. This is clearly an answer to Bailhache's letter to Clay of July 8, Clay MSS.

CHAPTER XI

“The Middle ‘Thirties”

DURING the summer of 1835, while John McLean and Henry Clay were concluding that their Presidential prospects were unpromising, a matter of primary interest in Ohio was a boundary dispute with Michigan.¹ Considerable excitement attended this episode which had its basis in mistaken geographical conceptions. John Mitchell, a Virginia physician and botanist and a fellow of the Royal Society, had drawn a detailed map of western America for the British Lords of Trade, and Mitchell's prestige was so great that the map was accepted as authoritative in locating the Proclamation Line of 1763 and the boundaries fixed by the Peace Commission of 1782. In 1778 it had been endorsed, with no substantial change, by Thomas Hutchins, “geographer-general to the United States.” His map located the southern tip of Lake Michigan farther north than was actually the case, and thereby contributed to the general belief held in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth century, that a parallel drawn eastward from the southern extremity of Lake Michigan would strike Lake Erie at a point somewhat north of Maumee Bay.

Accordingly, the Ordinance of 1787 described the dividing line between the lower and upper tiers of states to be erected in the Old Northwest as “an east and west line drawn through the southerly bend or extreme of Lake Michigan.”² This was also the basis for the western part of the northern boundary of Ohio in the Enabling Act passed by Congress in 1802 to permit Ohio to enter the Union, and a similar provision was included in the act for the organization of Michigan Territory in 1805. It is a

¹ A concise and accurate summary of this is found in Carl Wittke, “Ohio-Michigan Boundary Dispute Re-examined,” *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, XLV, 299-319.

² Article V.

reasonable inference, moreover, that the sessions of Congress which approved these acts did so in the belief that the boundary of Ohio would strike Lake Erie as the mapmakers had indicated.³

Prior to 1830, apparently only one mapmaker, John Fitch, the inventor, located Lake Michigan and Lake Erie in correct relation to each other. But, during the deliberations of the Ohio Constitutional Convention of 1802, an old beaver trapper had informed the delegates that the southern tip of Lake Michigan lay much farther south than had been supposed, or the generally accepted maps indicated. Hence the first State Constitution of Ohio (1802) embodied the boundaries specified in the congressional Enabling Act but with this proviso:

"If the southerly bend or extreme of Lake Michigan should extend so far south that a line drawn due east from it should . . . intersect the said Lake Erie east of the mouth of the Miami River of the lake [the Maumee] then . . . with the assent of the Congress of the United States, the northern boundary of this State shall be established by, and extend to, a direct line from the southern extremity of Lake Michigan to the most northerly cape of the Miami [Maumee] Bay."⁴

Congress accepted the Constitution of Ohio but apparently considered the proviso as relating to a matter which could only be settled in the light of information not at that time available. Hence, the qualifying boundary proviso was neither accepted nor rejected by the national legislature, and Ohio proceeded to believe that her northwestern boundary followed the *intent* of Congress, in a time of inadequate geographical knowledge.

In 1812, Congress sanctioned a careful survey of the disputed line, but because of the war, action was not taken until after the close of hostilities. By 1817, William Harris, under directions received from Edward Tiffin, surveyor-general of Ohio, surveyed the boundary as the proviso of the Ohio Constitution had indi-

³ A. M. Schlesinger, "Basis of Ohio-Michigan Boundary Dispute," *Ohio Cooperative Topographic Survey* (Mansfield, 1916), I, 59-68.

⁴ Ohio Constitution (1802), Article 7, Section 6.

cated. Ohio's State authorities approved of this "Harris line," but Michigan territorial officials, including Governor Lewis Cass, protested emphatically to the Administration, and a new survey, "the Fulton line," was made in accordance with Michigan's claims.⁵

In the meantime all attempts to settle the dispute amicably were fruitless, and in practise Michigan exercised local jurisdiction over the region. In 1831 Michigan endeavored in vain to effect a compromise settlement. By 1833, with the westward movement of population flowing into the region northwest of Toledo, statehood for Michigan became a practical issue. Ohio held that the whole boundary question should be settled prior to the grant of statehood, while Michigan resented any delay in attaining full stature in the Union and felt that the courts could later dispose of the problem by judicial decision. Under these circumstances the question became a party issue, which presented perplexing difficulties for the Jackson Administration.

The United States Senate passed a bill favorable to the claims of Ohio (and Indiana and Illinois), but John Quincy Adams who had returned to public life as a congressman from Massachusetts was instrumental in defeating it in the House. Michigan, through her legislative council, served notice that she would oppose any efforts "to rob her of her soil" but proposed a settlement by commissioners from both Michigan and Ohio. This proposal was disdainfully rejected by Governor Robert Lucas of Ohio in a special message to the legislature of the State on February 6, 1835. Lucas contended that a state could only deal with a territory through the Federal Government, and belligerently he urged the legislature to extend county boundaries to the northern limit of Ohio's claims. The legislature accepted this leadership and provided for marking the boundary along the Harris line which it accepted as official. When Stevens Thomson Mason, Virginia-born "boy Governor" of Michigan Territory, learned of such aggressive activity, he ordered the territorial militia to be ready for an emer-

⁵ A. M. Soule, "Controversy over the Ohio-Michigan Boundary," *Ohio Cooperative Topographic Survey*, I, 74-7.

gency, appealed to President Andrew Jackson to intervene, and secured territorial legislation affixing penalties for the exercise of jurisdiction in the region under authority other than that of Michigan or the United States.

Jackson wrote to both Mason and Lucas, stating that he had asked the opinion of the attorney-general, who soon gave a rather strangely evasive exposition of the legal aspects of the question, and expressing the hope that the two executives would refrain from violent action until a solution of the problem could be reached. At the same time Richard Rush and Benjamin C. Howard were sent as peacemakers by the President. Traveling with all possible speed across Lake Erie on the steamboat *Detroit*, the two emissaries reached Toledo via the Michigan metropolis. After arriving at Toledo (then a community of seventy or eighty houses) Rush wrote that Ohio apparently was assembling an armed force to come near the Harris line in support of the Ohio commissioners running the line, if Michigan should attempt to obstruct them by force. Rush feared a crisis, for he had learned that Michigan was planning to indict and arrest the commissioners. Possible bloodshed, he felt, might be averted, if Mason would have the court proceedings delayed until the meeting of Congress, a postponement which the young acting governor refused to sanction.⁶

By that time the boundary commissioners appointed by Lucas had arrived at Perrysburg, just within undisputed Ohio territory. There they awaited the governor and his staff, who were coming via Defiance, fifty miles up the Maumee, and who arrived on April 2.⁷ The Ohio militia, assembled under Major-general John Bell, were prepared to defend Ohio's claims. In the meantime, Mason had come from Detroit to Monroe, just north of the disputed territory, where three hundred men were said to be stationed with fifteen hundred stands of arms taken from the Federal

⁶ Richard Rush to Martin Van Buren, Toledo, Ohio, Mar. 20, 1835, Van Buren MSS.

⁷ Columbus *Ohio State Journal*, Apr. 11, 1835.

arsenal at White Pigeon. The commissioners sent by Jackson attempted to secure delay until the next session of Congress but with no effective results. Ohio took measures to assert her authority, and the Michigan authorities planned to execute processes against them for so doing. Accordingly, the Ohio boundary commission undertook its work, but while proceeding eastward from the northwest corner of Ohio on the Harris line, nine of the party were attacked by Michigan men and taken to Tecumseh. All but one were admitted to bail or were discharged, but accounts of the incident were exaggerated in Ohio, and Lucas issued a proclamation for convening the legislature on June 8.⁸

Rush and Howard now proposed as terms of conciliation that Ohio should be permitted to run the boundary line and that persons in the disputed area should submit to the legal processes of either government until the whole matter could be settled by the Federal judiciary. Lucas expressed a willingness to agree to these peace proposals, but Mason steadfastly opposed any plan of concurrent jurisdiction. Thereupon, the Ohio legislature formally accepted the proposals of the Federal mediators, provided Michigan should be compelled to do likewise. Lest this should not be done, the legislature appropriated \$300,000 and sanctioned a loan of a similar amount to extend Ohio's jurisdiction and to re-mark the boundary line. It also prescribed imprisonment of from three to seven years for those guilty of the “abduction” of Ohio citizens and created a new county (Lucas) largely in the disputed area.⁹

At this point warlike preparations went on anew, and fist fights and shooting frays occurred in the Toledo vicinity. The Ohio law providing for the organization of Lucas County required that common pleas court should be held in Toledo on September 7. By the preceding day both Michigan and Ohio troops had been quartered on opposite sides of the Maumee, but Ohio authorities

⁸ T. B. Galloway, “Ohio-Michigan Boundary Line Dispute,” *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, IV (1895), 217-21.

⁹ John L. Taylor to Duncan McArthur, June 13, 1835, McArthur MSS.; *Ohio State Journal*, June 20, 1835.

employed an artful stratagem in order to avoid conflict. The Ohio judges and officers of the court, in the quiet of the night stole into the sleeping village of Toledo, and by three o'clock in the morning the court had been organized and had adjourned, after an official record had been made by the glare of a tallow dip. They then repaired to a neighboring tavern, duly registered, and were preparing to drink a toast, when someone startled them by crying out that Michigan troops were near at hand. The Ohioans hurriedly rode away, though the alarm was a false one, and considered that the asserting of jurisdiction in the disputed area was a moral victory. When Michigan authorities learned what had happened, soldiers and messengers were bestirred to action but with no resulting damage other than the "wanton butchery of two noble horses . . . the destruction of gardens and orchards,—shooting of hogs, and some petty depredations about the printing office" of the *Toledo Gazette*.¹⁰

The whole controversy greatly embarrassed the Democratic Administration at Washington, for both Lucas and Mason were Democrats. Jackson at every stage had counseled moderation. In the spring, when news had come from Rush, telling of expected hostilities, Jackson had written in a memorandum, apparently communicated to Van Buren:

"Mr. Rush is mistaken about Ohio concentrating a military force. The Gov. [Lucas] is not authorized to do so, and there is no appropriation to meet such expense—before he can do this the Legislature must be called, and if called, it will not appropriate for such service. We can do no more than we have, we must do no act that might be construed into an acquiescence in this usurped jurisdiction by Ohio."¹¹

Jackson did not prophesy correctly what was to take place, but he was not one to hesitate to carry out what he considered his duty. He had informed Lucas that if a crisis developed he would see that the laws were upheld, and that his stand would be based on At-

¹⁰ Quoted by Wittke, "Ohio-Michigan Boundary Dispute," 309.

¹¹ Memorandum of Andrew Jackson, undated, Van Buren MSS.

torney-general Benjamin F. Butler's opinion that the law of the United States provided for the Fulton line as claimed by Michigan until the Harris line had been accepted by Congress. John Quincy Adams considered the ruling of the attorney-general "a surrender of the right of Michigan to the lands," "perfumed with the thirty-five electoral votes of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois,"¹² for the northern boundaries of Indiana and Illinois were also affected. According to Lewis Cass, Butler had intended no such interpretation. In Ohio, Cass, who was naturally very zealous for the interests of Michigan, was bitterly accused of using his position as secretary of war to aid his own locality and of being in reality the author of Butler's opinion.¹³

Lucas, in the meantime, had been besieged by much conflicting advice, some Ohioans urging him to exercise extreme caution because of the general "aversion to using force or spilling blood," while others insisted upon the desirability of a defiant assertion of Ohio's alleged rights. Lucas' zeal and Jackson's decisiveness may both have been moderated by a desire to avoid a clash between a Democratic State administration and a national administration of the same party. At any rate, after the drastic legislative action of Ohio in June, Lucas had decided to send three mutual friends to Washington to confer with the President. Those selected, all strong Van Buren men, were Colonel Noah H. Swayne, Federal district attorney; David Disney, speaker of the Ohio Senate; and William Allen.¹⁴ Allen wrote to Martin Van Buren, showing the concern that was felt at this time for the Democratic Party:

"I need not, therefore, suggest to you the necessity of your counsels and influence at Washington. The truth is the President must agree to the proposed terms or all is lost with his friends in this state, beside the more important consequences to the general welfare of the State and the Union."¹⁵ Former Governor Ethan Allen

¹² John Quincy Adams, *Memoirs*, ed. by C. F. Adams (Philadelphia, 1874-7), IX, 233.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 237; *Ohio State Journal*, Apr. 4, May 16, 23, Dec. 29, 1835.

¹⁴ William Miner to John McLean, Columbus, June 28, 1835, McLean MSS.

¹⁵ William Allen to Van Buren, Columbus, June 20, 1835, Van Buren MSS.

Brown, a prominent Ohio Democrat, wrote at the same time that compromise was necessary for the success of the party, since it was widely stated in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois that the Administration had taken the side of Michigan.¹⁶

The President personally wrote Lucas on July 4, "to avoid forcible hostile collision." Apparently Lucas, Jackson, Secretary of State John Forsyth and Butler agreed that Ohio might mark the boundary without involving the exercise of jurisdiction in the contested region. Seemingly, Jackson gave private assurances to the three commissioners from Ohio that Mason would be removed if he declined to accept the terms which Rush and Howard had proposed and which Ohio Democrats regarded as essential to a peaceful solution. These terms involved Ohio's survey of the Harris line, the exercise of concurrent jurisdiction by Ohio and Michigan in the disputed area, and the postponement of prosecutions.

According to Butler's opinion, if the President was obliged to enforce territorial laws, he could, nevertheless, replace an officer who insisted upon such enforcement. Jackson took advantage of this loophole and removed Mason, substituting in his place John S. Horner of Virginia. Ohio refrained from any further endeavor to exercise jurisdiction in the disputed region and undertook without interference to survey the line which she claimed. Horner proceeded to follow instructions from Washington and pardoned—prior to trial—those who had run afoul of the Michigan authorities because of their espousal of Ohio's claims in the disputed region. In Michigan Horner was burned in effigy and publicly insulted, but he worked in harmony with the Ohio governor to bring about the solution of the problem that Ohio insisted upon.

Some Whigs during the spring and summer of 1835 desired to use the critical situation to create a rift between the Jackson Administration and Ohio Democrats. After Jackson and Lucas had obviously arrived at a working agreement and the matter had been referred to Congress for action, however, members of both parties

¹⁶ Ethan A. Brown to *id.*, Cincinnati, June 24, 1835, *ibid.*

assisted in a settlement. The Whigs wished to satisfy Ohio, and the Democrats feared to do otherwise. John Q. Adams protested in the House and Thomas Benton in the Senate, but on June 15, 1836, Jackson signed "an act to establish the northern boundary of Ohio, and to provide for the admission of the State of Michigan, upon the conditions therein expressed,"¹⁷ in other words the acceptance of the boundaries desired by Ohio, but with the granting of nine thousand square miles to Michigan in the Upper Peninsula. The fact that there were twenty-nine congressmen in the House from Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois and thirty-five electoral votes from those states, which were all opposed to Michigan's interest, had been a highly important element in Ohio's favor.¹⁸

In earlier discussions, it had been asserted that Lucas was being duped by those who wished to separate him from his political friends outside the State, in order to ruin him and the Democratic Party in Ohio.¹⁹ Certainly some Democratic papers were less enthusiastic about the course of their Democratic governor than were many of the Whigs, and Taylor Webster, Democratic congressman from Hamilton, felt that Lucas and the Ohio legislature were acting unreasonably.²⁰ Many Whigs, however, also had opposed the whole procedure. Benjamin Wade, later to become one of the most noted of American senators, wrote in May, 1835, that "the good people" of Ohio had become nullifiers "to all intents." The same principle which Ohioans had denounced in South Carolina and Georgia, he said, had been accepted by them because it had been to their interest.²¹ On the other hand, Lucas was ardently supported by Congressman Thomas L. Hamer, who acted as an intermediary in Washington, and by a portion of the Democratic press. On the whole, the people of the State stood

¹⁷ *Senate Journal*, 24 Cong., 1 Sess., 438.

¹⁸ Adams, *Memoirs*, IX, 342.

¹⁹ James Duane Doty to Van Buren, Detroit, Apr. 3, 1835, Van Buren MSS.

²⁰ Columbus *Ohio Monitor*, May 20, Sept. 28, 1835; *Ohio State Journal*, June 20, 1835; Soule, "Controversy over the Ohio-Michigan Boundary," 92.

²¹ Benjamin F. Wade to Joshua R. Giddings, Jefferson, May 18, 1835, Giddings MSS.

behind their governor, though when the militia was called out, there was no enthusiastic response in some sections of the State. The Democratic *Western Hemisphere* at Columbus asserted:

"It is no party conflict. The whole people of Ohio are the party complainants. One heart, one mind is here, as to the right of Ohio to the soil; and the unanimity of opinion in the passage of the act [by the Ohio legislature] for the re-marking of the line, is evidence of the common feeling with which the position of Ohio will be maintained."

With this the Whig organ at Columbus agreed: "To this we heartily respond. On this question all party lines are obliterated—we are all citizens, animated by a common interest and with one feeling—Jackson or anti-Jackson, we go hand in hand in the assertion of our rights, and in the maintaining of the sovereignty of Ohio over her legitimate domain."²²

A Geauga County meeting, May 7, 1835, had adopted a resolution declaring that if the "General Government permit the authorities of Michigan to hold possession of said Territory, it places the United States in a state of war with Ohio,"²³ and Hamer had written to Lucas: "If he [Jackson] had intimated . . . that *force* would be used—I should have told him to his teeth—that if an armed man *dared* to pollute the soil of Ohio—he should be blotted from the face of the Earth;—and, that the first crack of a rifle would bring 200,000 freemen to the Border!"²⁴

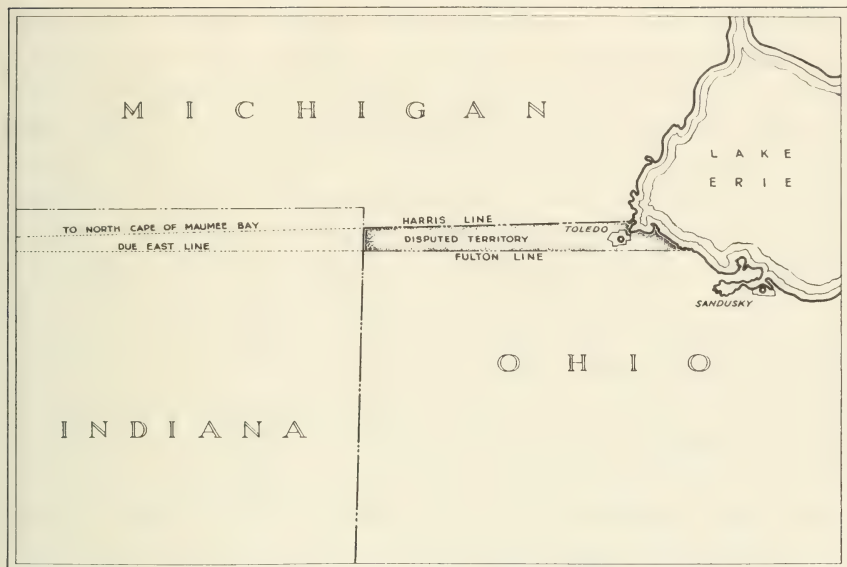
Most Ohioans, however, had been eager to avoid bloodshed, and the peaceful solution—as embodied in congressional legislation—was highly satisfactory to them. An area, eleven miles wide at the eastern terminus of the line and seven at the western border of Ohio (about four hundred square miles or approximately one-third of the whole of Rhode Island), was secured for Ohio.

The commercial interests of the State and especially the inhabi-

²² *Ohio State Journal*, May 16, 1835.

²³ *Ibid.*, May 23, 1835.

²⁴ March 14, 1835, quoted by Wittke, "Ohio-Michigan Boundary Dispute," 314 note.



MAP 11. THE OHIO-MICHIGAN BOUNDARY DISPUTE

Based upon a map in Christopher E. Sherman, *The Ohio-Michigan Boundary* (Mansfield, O., 1916).

tants of Toledo were happy at the outcome. With plans developing for the building of the Wabash and Erie Canal, it had become increasingly apparent that the canal ought to empty into Maumee Bay, rather than terminate at the town of Maumee. Persons interested in the development of Toledo naturally wanted it to be the terminus of the inland waterway and preferred a political connection with a rapidly developing State rather than with a territory just arriving at statehood. On January 26, 1837, Michigan was formally admitted to the Union with the southern boundary favorable to Ohio, and the controversy became a matter of history.²⁵

During this episode, the strong stand taken by Lucas and the legislature may have made a favorable impression upon the voters of Ohio. At any rate, the State elections of 1835 resulted in an overwhelming victory for the Democrats. The new House consisted of approximately forty-eight Democrats to twenty-four

²⁵ Soule, "Controversy over the Ohio-Michigan Boundary," 89, 103, 109.

Whigs, with the Senate composed of about twenty Democrats to sixteen Whigs. Even in the Whig stronghold, the Western Reserve, there was a marked drift toward the Democratic Party. While in the previous year there had been no Democrat from that section in the State legislature, by the elections of 1835 six were sent to the House as compared with only three Whigs. In Belmont County, in southeastern Ohio, moreover, Benjamin Ruggles (Whig), for eighteen years United States senator from Ohio, was defeated for a seat in the State Senate.²⁶ There was little or no trouble in organizing the legislature, the Democratic caucus meeting as usual in Columbus at the Tontine Coffee House (called the "Tin Pan" by derisive Whigs). Charles Hammond, writing from the State capital reported: "The political surface is as smooth as an unruffled sheet of water. The majority is decisive; the antagonist party is powerless. But the undercurrents are crossing one another a little roughly at the bottom."²⁷

One of these undercurrents was the question of the Ohio Life Insurance and Trust Company of Cincinnati which was causing considerable concern within the portals of Democracy. In fact, since the chartering of the large number of banks by the legislature and the numerous meetings in the State during the early part of 1834 protesting against the removal of deposits, the bank question had by no means been forgotten. In the summer of that year, the assistant editor of the *Ohio State Journal* had returned from a three months' tour of various portions of the State and had reported: "The last anchor of the crazy, dismasted and rudderless ship of the piratic crew of officeholders and expectants, is the cry of 'Bank! Bank!! Bank!!' Tell them of the unprecedented corruptions, and unparalleled defalcations of the Post office department, and they cry out 'the Bank.'"²⁸

In the fall of 1834 an interesting situation had developed in

²⁶ *Ohio Monitor*, Oct. 26, Nov. 2, 1835; *Cleveland Whig*, Oct. 20, 1835; *Columbus (Ohio) Western Hemisphere*, Oct. 21, 1835.

²⁷ *Cincinnati Gazette*, Dec. 11, 1835.

²⁸ *Ohio State Journal*, Aug. 9, 1834.

Cincinnati, where Bellamy Storer, Whig, was running for Congress against Robert T. Lytle, Democrat. The need for the Bank in Cincinnati had caused Lytle in the spring to favor its unqualified recharter. Storer was in favor of the Bank with modifications and by summer Lytle had come to the same position, but Lytle as a Democrat was at a disadvantage in maintaining this position and was defeated, due—in Jackson's opinion—to Lytle's "own folly."²⁹

During the next two years the trust company was a bone of contention in Ohio, especially in Cincinnati. Chartered in February 1834, by a Democratic legislature, when there had been "a great distress for money in order to save the community from being crushed by the United States Bank,"³⁰ it was capitalized at \$2,000,000, one-half of which was for banking purposes. With power also to engage in the life insurance and trust business, it became one of the largest institutions of its kind in the country, and those opposed to monopolies of all sorts naturally expressed hostility to it. The statement of the *United States Telegraph* (Washington, D. C.) that it was "a bantling of the Albany Regency" was firmly denied, and many Democrats, especially Lytle, began openly to oppose it.³¹

The institution became something of an issue in the elections of 1835, but the Democrats themselves were divided on the question, at the State convention of the party, January 8, 1836. When a letter of Senator Thomas Benton of Missouri, severely rebuking bank monopolists, was read, it deeply disturbed David T. Disney, a prominent delegate and a director of the Insurance and Trust Company. William H. Tracy described it as a "fire brand" thrown into the convention, and George H. Flood, a friend of Disney, moved adjournment. Adjournment was voted without a resolution against the institution even being offered, to the great disgust of Samuel Medary of the Columbus *Ohio Monitor* who called the

²⁹ John Reeves to McLean, Aug. 14, 1835, McLean MSS.; Jackson to Van Buren Oct. 27, 1834, Van Buren MSS.

³⁰ John H. Groesbeck to Van Buren, Cincinnati, Mar. 11, 1836, *ibid.*

³¹ Cincinnati *Gazette*, Dec. 6, 1834; *Ohio Monitor*, Sept. 28, Oct. 26, 1835, Mar. 21, 1836.

convention "the poorest that was ever held as to the establishing of fundamental principles."³²

The Ohio legislature, however, could not avoid the question. There, a bill for the repeal of the charter was introduced. It was favored by most, though not all of the Democratic papers of the State. One declared that the company, if retained, would become "a leading member in the confederacy" of state incorporated banks in alliance with the Bank chartered by Pennsylvania, and another feared that with \$4,000,000 in mortgages on real estate, it would soon own half of Ohio. More moderately the *Advertiser* in Cincinnati urged the "paring down" of the "inordinate" powers of the institution rather than repeal of the charter.³³ Hammond declared that the proposal for repeal struck "fundamentally at the security of all property" and was "utterly impotent" to obtain its object. The editor of the Cincinnati *Daily Republican*, moreover, was particularly influential in expressing the views of the pro-trust Democrats. In an editorial late in March he went so far as to publish what he said were Van Buren's views on the question, received from a citizen of New York. This was reported at once to the Vice-President by Moses Dawson. Van Buren sent a letter to the publishers of the *Republican*, disavowing the expression of any opinion on a purely local question "pertaining to the State, its legislature, and its people."³⁴ Lytle was again active in his opposition to the institution, and Dawson wrote to Jackson describing the company as a dangerous and mischievous institution and urging repeal by the legislatures lest the liberties of the country be "held by a slender, a precarious tenure indeed."³⁵

Dawson and Lytle were important Democratic politicians, but they did not represent all of Ohio Democracy on the repeal of

³² *Ibid.*, Jan. 14, 18, 1836.

³³ *Western Hemisphere*, Feb. 24, 1836; *Ohio Monitor*, Feb. 29, 1836; Cincinnati *Advertiser*, Feb. 27, March 19, 1836.

³⁴ Cincinnati *Gazette*, Feb. 18, 1836; Cincinnati *Advertiser*, March 19, 1836; Moses Dawson to Van Buren, Cincinnati, Mar. 25, 1836, Van Buren MSS.; Van Buren to Dawson, Washington, Apr. 5, 1836, *ibid.*; *id.* to Editor of Cincinnati *Republican*, Apr. 5, 1836, *ibid.*

³⁵ Letter dated Cincinnati, May 1, 1836, Jackson MSS.

the charter. Of the twenty directors residing both in Ohio and elsewhere, four were prominent Ohio Democrats. Two, Disney and Swayne, were the commissioners sent with William Allen by Lucas to Washington in 1835 to present the case of Ohio in the Michigan boundary dispute. Disney had long been in the Ohio Senate and had been its speaker; Swayne was Federal district attorney. The third, Micajah T. Williams had been canal commissioner, surveyor-general, and a candidate for the United States Senate. The fourth, Daniel Kilgore, had enjoyed various honors, including that of being a delegate to the national party convention in 1832.³⁶ Five hundred citizens in Cincinnati signed a petition to the legislature against repeal. As a result only William Conclin of the Hamilton County delegation in either house, held out for repeal, and when it was proposed to postpone the matter indefinitely, the vote in the House was favorable, 40:27. Seventeen Democrats voted to postpone.³⁷

In 1835 there were thirty-one chartered banks, generally considered sound, in Ohio, and the legislature refused to grant a single additional charter. The next year a house committee considered petitions for banks at thirty-four places but reported that a large proportion of the banks already in existence could extend their capital to \$500,000 but had rarely done so, hence an increase in banking capital did not seem necessary. Only one additional bank was chartered, the bank of Manhattan in the newly established town of Toledo. That many more banks were not then chartered was due in part to the rising power of the "no bank" or Locofoco Democrats who agreed with Jackson that gold and silver were the proper currency for the country and that a rapid increase in banks and paper money should be discouraged.³⁸ Along with these ideas went a rising objection to the circulation of paper notes in small denominations, not only because they tended to

³⁶ *Western Hemisphere*, Mar. 9, 12, Apr. 29, 1835; *Cincinnati Advertiser*, Apr. 11, 1835; "Old Northwest" *Genealogical Quarterly* (Columbus), I (1898), 1-15.

³⁷ Dawson to Jackson, Cincinnati, Mar. 16, 1836, Jackson MSS.

³⁸ C. C. Huntington, "History of Banking and Currency in Ohio before the Civil War," *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, XXIV, 143-9.

drive specie from circulation, but also because they were much more likely to be kept in circulation in excess of a proper amount than were notes of a larger denomination, for they were less often presented for redemption.

In 1834, the New York legislature considered the prohibition of all bills of less than five dollars, and Governor William L. Marcy of that state urged other states to do the same. Lucas, accordingly, in December recommended that the Ohio legislature take favorable action. A joint committee of the two houses, however, reported that the same excess of notes which probably existed in New York, was not found in Ohio. The members were willing for reasons of convenience and expediency to suppress such notes, if it were not that such action would interfere with rights already granted by the legislature to the banks. Hence, only by forbidding State and county treasurers to receive notes issued by an Ohio bank could these notes be legislated out of existence unless the bank should agree on its own account to cease issuing notes of less than five dollars and surrender the privilege. The Whig press strongly objected to such a proposal and was pleased when consideration was postponed until the next session of the legislature.³⁹

Upon the convening of the next legislature in December, 1835, the Senate passed a resolution instructing the State auditor to ask the local banks to report to the legislature the quantity of notes of less than five dollar denominations on hand and to state whether they were willing to surrender the privilege of issuing notes of the smaller denominations. The answers were unsatisfactory, five banks absolutely declining to surrender the privilege, but the Democratic legislature was bent on suppressing the small notes. Accordingly, on March 14, 1836, a law was passed, subjecting the banks of the State to a tax of twenty per cent. (instead of five per cent., as provided by the law of March 12, 1831) on all annual dividends, unless they should surrender their rights to issue or circulate bills of less than three dollars by July 4, 1836, and those of less than five dollars by July 4, 1837. Two banks that had charters

³⁹ *Cincinnati Gazette*, Jan. 6, 1835; *Ohio State Journal*, Jan. 31, Feb. 13, 1835.

conflicting with this legislation were excepted. The law passed the upper house by a vote of 20 to 15, all the affirmative votes being cast by Democrats and all negative votes by Whigs. In the lower house the 38 votes in favor were all cast by Democrats and the 28 against all by Whigs, except six.⁴⁰

In other ways this session of the legislature showed its devotion to Democratic policies. It approved, by a strict party vote, Benton's resolutions in the United States Senate to expunge the censure of Jackson for removing government deposits from the United States Bank. The Whigs recorded their protests in both houses of the legislature and in meetings throughout the State.⁴¹

A new apportionment bill was also passed during the same session. This legislation was particularly resented by the Whigs and denounced at their public meetings, for it went far to insure the election of a Democratic United States senator. The Democratic majority arranged that in the counties where the number of representatives varied from one year to another, in the session of 1836-7, the counties controlled by their party should have a maximum representation. A protest was formally issued by the Whig minority in the State Senate, but the Whigs had either been found napping or had seen the uselessness of active opposition to the bill, for the ayes and nays were not recorded in the House and in the Senate there were but two votes against the measure.⁴² Cuyahoga, Huron, Muskingum, Belmont and Trumbull counties, represented by Whigs, had six representatives in the Ohio House in 1836-7 for a population of 30,205, while Knox, Tuscarawas, Harrison, Perry, Preble, Morgan, Clinton, Holmes, Coshocton, and Monroe, represented by Democrats, had fourteen representatives for 30,504 inhabitants.⁴³ As a result, in the fall elections, although eleven Whig members were sent to Congress and eight

⁴⁰ Huntington, "History of Banking," 152-5.

⁴¹ *Western Hemisphere*, Dec. 20, 30, 1835; *Ohio State Journal*, Jan. 29, Feb. 9, 12, 19, 1836.

⁴² *Cleveland Advertiser*, Aug. 14, 1836.

⁴³ St. Clairsville (Ohio) *Belmont Chronicle*, Aug. 13, Oct. 1, 1836; *Ohio State Journal*, Aug. 27, 1836.

Democrats, and although the Whig candidate for governor won easily, the Democrats had a small majority in the legislature, insuring the choice of one of their political faith to the United States Senate.⁴⁴

In the contest for the governorship, Joseph Vance of Urbana, a native of Pennsylvania, who had come to Ohio in 1801, had served several terms in the legislature and had sat in Congress from 1821 to 1836, was the Whig candidate. The Democratic nominee was Eli Baldwin of Trumbull County, a native of Connecticut, who also had come to Ohio in 1801 and had served seven terms in the State legislature.⁴⁵ Vance was victorious by a majority of about six thousand votes (92,204 to 86,158), a result attributed by the Democrats to Baldwin's vote in favor of "selling white men into slavery" a decade and a half before. This referred to a vote which he had given in the State Senate during the session of 1820-21 for a section of a bill which provided that anyone convicted of petty larceny and unable to pay the fine and costs of the case should be sold at "public sale" for a period of time in order to raise the necessary money. The Whigs, however, discredited this reason, declaring that Baldwin had run ahead of the ticket and had polled more than the average strength of his party.⁴⁶

In Ohio, as usual, the State elections had been held in October with the Presidential contest an event of November. In the latter campaign, the Whigs of Ohio supported William Henry Harrison, but only after the claims of others had been carefully considered. In the early maneuvering, among those mentioned for the place, in addition to McLean and Clay was Daniel Webster. He had visited Ohio in June, 1833, coming by the steamboat *Superior* on Lake Erie to Fairport Harbor, and then proceeding by private carriage to Cleveland. Apparently he made no great effort to win popular applause, for he drove through Painesville without mak-

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, Oct. 22, 1836; Cleveland *Herald*, Oct. 24, 1836.

⁴⁵ Eli Baldwin, Autobiography, MS. dated Aug. 11, 1836 (in Western Reserve Historical Society Library, Cleveland).

⁴⁶ Cleveland *Herald*, Oct. 26, 1836; Ravenna (Ohio) *Western Courier*, Nov. 3, 1836.

ing a stop, but at Cleveland he gave the impression that he was considering his Presidential possibilities.⁴⁷ Later he spent six days in Cincinnati where he shared a public dinner with William T. Barry. The Clay men there were rather cool toward him, partly because of his speech at the dinner, when he paid tribute to the Jackson Administration. On account of the cholera epidemic he did not visit Kentucky but spent two days at Chillicothe with Duncan McArthur and other friends. Thence he returned to Washington via Circleville, Lancaster, Zanesville and Steubenville, where he partook of a public dinner.⁴⁸ Some believed that his chances for the Presidency rested upon Antimasonic support and his endorsement of the President's proclamation against nullification. His chief popularity in Ohio was in the northeastern section. Even there, however, it was generally believed that he would serve the country best on the Supreme Court. The Painesville *Telegraph* declared that in his success it "should glory more than in that of any other man" but that his case was hopeless.⁴⁹ Dawson in Cincinnati termed him the least popular candidate in the West. Elisha Whittlesey, a leading Whig, wrote bluntly to him that his locality would be against him and that since he could obtain no consequential support from the Democrats, he could not run better than Adams or Clay had done. Whittlesey explained that the Antimasons would support only "a Republican dyed in the wool" and that the Whig hope rested in a former Jacksonian who would divide the Democratic vote while concentrating that of the old National Republicans. If the opponents of Jackson would not do this, he elaborated, the only alternative was to "let Van Buren walk over the course unmolested, and let corruption stalk throughout the land unrestricted. Let the bank go down, stop internal improvements, give a sickly support to the tariff, and commission Lot Clarke Chief Justice of the United States."

⁴⁷ *Western Courier*, June 13, 1833; Elisha Whittlesey to McLean, Canfield, Ohio, Sept. 14, 1833, McLean MSS.

⁴⁸ *Western Courier*, July 11, 14, 1833; William T. Barry to Van Buren, Cincinnati July 7, 1833, Van Buren MSS.

⁴⁹ *Cleveland Whig*, Feb. 18, 1835; *Ohio State Journal*, Jan. 21, June 6, 1835.

Whittlesey favored the candidacy of McLean and let it be understood that in case of success, Webster would not go unrewarded.⁵⁰

In certain Ohio counties State-rights Democrats had endorsed McLean for the Presidency early in 1834, and with the collapse of his candidacy, these groups, which revered the Virginia and Kentucky resolutions of 1798, looked for another candidate. In January, 1835, a Franklin County State-rights meeting at Columbus had reaffirmed an emphasis upon their principles and had asserted that the "fatal Proclamation of December 1832, and its natural progeny, the Force Bill," had stimulated anew grave inquiry as to the true nature of the Union.⁵¹ The name of Hugh L. White of Tennessee was being mentioned in Ohio, and it was thought that the State-rights people might turn to him, but objection was made that he had favored Jackson's Proclamation and the Force Bill. A Muskingum County meeting late in 1835 expressed opposition to a protective tariff and internal improvements at national expense, and—in view of McLean's withdrawal—endorsed White.⁵²

Hammond had described White as "a sound lawyer, possessing a high private and professional character, and as a man not likely to be moved by impulse to adopt and push to dangerous extent, doctrines hostile to the true spirit of the constitution" but as a Presidential candidate only preferable to Van Buren.⁵³ A correspondent from Ross County to the *Ohio State Journal* wrote a series of letters to show that White was a logical choice. The possibility of his carrying the State, however, was never conceded by responsible politicians, and the statement of a writer in a Chillicothe paper that there was no newspaper in Ohio supporting White and that personally he knew no individual who preferred White to William Henry Harrison was undoubtedly true.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Whittlesey to Daniel Webster, Canfield, Sept. 14, 1833, Webster MSS.; Webster to Jeremiah Mason, Jan. 22, 1835, *ibid.*

⁵¹ *Ohio State Journal*, Jan. 28, 1835.

⁵² *Ibid.*, Nov. 13, Dec. 8, 1835.

⁵³ *Cincinnati Gazette*, Dec. 27, 1834.

⁵⁴ *Ohio State Journal*, Oct. 30, Nov. 6, 20, 27, Dec. 25, 1835; John M. Creed to Ewing, Columbus, Dec. 22, 1834, Ewing MSS.; Miner to McLean, Jan. 26, 1835, McLean MSS.

By that time, the name of Harrison was being widely mentioned. Since his return from Colombia to North Bend in April, 1830, he had experienced severe financial misfortunes, due partly to the indiscretion of his sons, hence he had become eager to secure a profitable office. In that year he had been suggested as a candidate for governor and in January, 1831, as a candidate for senator. In 1834 he had been mentioned for Congress but had decided to study the situation before entering the race and had finally given way to Bellamy Storer who became the successful Whig candidate. In 1834 Harrison had been appointed clerk of the common pleas court of Hamilton County, an office whose duties could be largely intrusted to his son-in-law, and one which helped him relieve his financial strain.⁵⁵ In the meantime Harrison was keeping in touch with some of his old political friends. In September, 1834, he rejected an invitation to a celebration at Indianapolis of the Battle of the Thames since a similar invitation to Colonel Richard M. Johnson tended to place the latter's services on a par with his own.⁵⁶ Two months later the initial proposal of his name for the Presidency appeared in a Pennsylvania paper, though it may have been prompted by some Ohioan. Harrison, enthusiastic about the suggestion, wrote in buoyant terms of the prospect of a "clerk and clod hopper" being considered as "the only one at all likely to overthrow the champion of the Empire State."⁵⁷

Undoubtedly the first move in his favor in Ohio was at a meeting of the voters of Delhi, Miami and Greene townships in Hamilton County in early January, 1835, just after the nomination of McLean had been made by Ohio legislators. John W. Bailhache of the *Ohio State Journal*, who opposed McLean, seemed pleased with this turn of affairs, but others predicted that the "farcical nomination" of old Tippecanoe would "shortly end in smoke."⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio, *Quarterly Publications* (Cincinnati), III (1908), 69, 81 and note; *Cincinnati Gazette*, Nov. 4, 1830, June 21, July 1, Oct. 28, 1834.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, Nov. 5, 1834.

⁵⁷ D. B. Goebel, *William Henry Harrison* (Indianapolis, 1926), 307.

⁵⁸ *Cincinnati Gazette*, Jan. 14, 1835; Miner to McLean, Columbus, Jan. 18, 1835, McLean MSS.; Andrew Lane to *id.*, Jan. 31, 1835, *ibid.*

At a Hamilton County meeting at Cincinnati, January 31, Harrison's ability and experience were endorsed, and some Whig papers suggested his name for the Vice-Presidency, a position which he refused to consider.⁵⁹

Bailhache still hoped that Clay would enter the contest, and in May declared that while he harbored "no unkind feeling" for Harrison, the movements in his favor had been limited to two or three township meetings and his personal friends in Cincinnati. Bailhache wrote Clay in July that if Harrison had a reasonable hope in other states he would probably run well in Ohio, far better than Webster or White, and in a contest with Van Buren, would probably carry the State. He questioned, however, whether Harrison could secure enough votes in the country as a whole to be elected. Clay replied that Harrison could more easily obtain the vote of Kentucky than any other candidate and that much might depend upon his strength in Pennsylvania. In September Clay made a trip to Cincinnati ostensibly to visit the agricultural fair but he may have had political conferences at that time. He saw Harrison frequently, but little Presidential talk passed between them, although Clay noticed the respect and cordiality with which Harrison treated him.⁶⁰

In September Hamer, prominent in Democratic circles, wrote that the "Ohio candidate" would "have his run of six months and then run down like an old wooden clock."⁶¹ Movements in his favor, however, were noted in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and New York, and sentiment in Ohio toward him was increasing. The erstwhile lukewarm *Ohio State Journal* declared in mid-September: "Looking to our own State, the 'signs of the times' for these last few weeks plainly indicate that the star of Gen. Harrison is rising to the ascendant. As wave follows wave, meetings for his nomina-

⁵⁹ *Ohio State Journal*, Feb. 13, July 24, 1835.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, May 2, 1835; John W. Bailhache to Henry Clay, Columbus, July 8, 1835; Clay to [Bailhache], Ashland, Sept. 13, 1835, Clay MSS.; *id.* to [*id.*], July 14, 1835, in Henry Clay, *Works*, ed. by Calvin Colton (New York, 1904), V, 391-5.

⁶¹ To James K. Polk, Georgetown, O., Sept. 26, 1835, Polk MSS.

tion are following meetings in various sections in succession."⁶² At Chillicothe the *Scioto Gazette* burst forth into verse at the prospect of a great Harrison meeting, called by "872 Freeman" for that place on September 26:

"Rejoice! Columbia's sons, rejoice!
To tyrants never bend the knee;
But join with heart, and soul, and voice,
For Harrison and 'Liberty.' "⁶³

Unfriendly critics remarked that persons who had abused the Democrats for supporting Jackson on account of his military services alone were praising Harrison, but the above-mentioned Chillicothe meeting stressed his accomplishments as a civil leader and his republican simplicity as "The Farmer of North Bend" as well as his army achievements.⁶⁴ Local meetings endorsing him followed in quick succession during the fall, and plans were made for a State convention at Columbus on Washington's Birthday, 1836.

The Whigs in Ohio, as we have seen, were composed of a variety of elements besides the old National Republicans. One of these, in reality a rather intangible group, was the State-rights Party. A writer in the *Ohio State Journal* complained that they were "equally contemned both by Whig and Tory leaders," but from the side of the Whigs, this was emphatically denied by Hammond.⁶⁵ Several of the group had been nominated to the Whig Convention of February 22, so the State-rights Association of Franklin County urged upon them the maintenance of the "distinct existence and perfect integrity" of the group but expressed a willingness to combine with the Whigs in order to restore the government to "its original purity" by any sacrifice short of its cherished principles.⁶⁶

⁶² Sept. 18, 1835.

⁶³ *Ohio State Journal*, Sept. 25, 1835.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, Oct. 9, 1835.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, Feb. 2, 19, 1836; *Cincinnati Gazette*, Feb. 6, 1836.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, Mar. 4, 1836; *Ohio State Journal*, Mar. 1, 1836.

Another constituent element of the Whig Party, the Antimasonic element, had tended to disintegrate as a result of the elections of 1832, but the State organization had not been completely crushed. Efforts to revive the movement in 1833 and 1834 aroused little response, and in February of the latter year the State organ of the party ceased publication with the explanation: "Thus to discontinue the publication of the *Register*, for the time being, may be looked upon by the enemies of antimasonry, as an evidence of the 'dying away' of the party in Ohio. Be it so. The fault, if fault it be, lies not at our door."⁶⁷

To some extent the Antimasonic question was still an issue in the elections of 1834, as Antimasonic leaders urged McLean for the Presidency and tended to support James Findlay for governor, but by that time the group was fairly well merged into the Whig movement.⁶⁸ Yet, petitions were constantly being sent to the Ohio legislature in regard to the Masons, and during 1835 feeling was still so strong that Joshua R. Giddings, who in 1830 had asked the Grand Lodge of Masons of Ohio to issue a new charter to the Jefferson Lodge, since the former had been mutilated by violence, returned the document, and the charter was rescinded.⁶⁹ Everywhere, however, as a political organization the party was disintegrating. Ohio had two representatives, Darius Lyman and Robert Hanna, on the National Committee of the party, that met but did not make a nomination in May, 1836. Soon afterwards the *Republican*, an Antimasonic paper at Dayton, one of the last of its kind, ceased publication with the explanation that the members of the party had joined other groups.⁷⁰

The Whig State Convention of 1836, supported Harrison for President and Thomas Ewing for senator, though the New England influence in Washington County was for Webster as "a states-

⁶⁷ Columbus *Ohio Register and Anti-Masonic Review*, Feb. 10, 1834.

⁶⁸ Whittlesey to McLean, Jefferson, Aug. 25, 1834; John Sloane to *id.*, Sept. 1, 1834. McLean MSS.; *Ohio State Journal*, Nov. 8, 1834.

⁶⁹ W. M. Cunningham, *History of Freemasonry in Ohio from 1791* (Cincinnati, 1909), 327.

⁷⁰ *Ohio State Journal*, Dec. 3, 1836.

man preeminently qualified to fill the Presidential chair."⁷¹ The convention at Columbus on February 22, attended by 1,034 official delegates, met in the New Theatre, and when this proved too small adjourned to the State-house Square, where a stage was erected. Henceforth, as to the Presidency "there was but one voice; and that was for the Patriot of North Bend." With more difficulty, the convention endorsed Francis Granger of New York and Joseph Vance for the Vice-Presidency and governorship respectively.⁷² Letters had been sent from Washington by Ewing and Congressman William Key Bond, urging the nomination of Granger rather than John Tyler of Virginia, who represented State-rights views.⁷³

Harrison was described in the address adopted by the convention as: "the gallant defender of his country in the hour of danger—the soldier who has suffered the privations, shared the toils, and breasted the dangers of savage warfare—a republican of the Jeffersonian school—and above all, a statesman and patriot who will, if elected, be President of *the Nation*, and not of a party—and make the offices what the constitution designed them to be, agencies for the benefit of the people, and not bribes with which to purchase votes."⁷⁴

A considerable number of former Jackson men who had supported McLean now favored Harrison whose freedom from embroilment in the political controversies of the previous eight years heightened his availability. Without the strong tincture of Jacksonism which had injured McLean's prospects, moreover, Harrison, who had been a Clay elector in 1824, was naturally more satisfactory to the old National Republicans, and his nomination was hailed with enthusiasm throughout Ohio.⁷⁵

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, Feb. 12, 1836.

⁷² *Cleveland Whig*, Dec. 28, 1835, Mar. 2, 1836; John G. Miller to John Tyler, Columbus, Feb. 23, 1836, in L. G. Tyler, *Life and Times of the Tylers* (Richmond, Va., 1884-96), I, 520.

⁷³ P. C. Gallagher to McLean, Mar. 24, 1836, McLean MSS.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, March 1, 1836.

⁷⁵ *Cincinnati Gazette*, Feb. 23, 1836; *Ohio State Journal*, Feb. 26, Mar. 11, 16, 25, Apr. 18, 1836; Goebel, *Harrison*, 307, 241.

In the meantime the Democrats had not been idle. In May, 1835, twenty-one delegates were sent to the national convention at Baltimore, described by the Whig press in Ohio as "a grand muster of officeholders" in which, of course, "there was no dissentient vote" as to the Presidency. There was open dissent by some Ohio members against registering the vote of the Ohio delegation for Colonel Richard Johnson of Kentucky, the nominee of the convention for Vice-President. Only with difficulty could Jackson men support one who was a warm advocate of West Point, and a friend of the Bank, and who, it was asserted, had "gone farther than the Abolitionists" in his relations with the Negroes—a reference to Johnson's cohabitation with a mulatto. The Whigs claimed that Johnson's name had been brought forward because of his connection with the Battle of the Thames in a hope of carrying the West.⁷⁶

During 1836, the air was full of charges and countercharges as the Presidential campaign developed. Harrison was attacked as immoral—"the betrayer of confiding innocence and the seducer of female virtue," and as incompetent both in civil and military positions. It was asserted that he had repeatedly been rejected for public office in his own county and that he had been nominated by the Whigs, in reality, because of his inconspicuous position in the public eye. His military services, moreover, were ridiculed as those of a "hero of twenty defeats," "the Hero of the Rear Guard," a "Petticoat Hero," and one noted for his "notorious military inefficiency."⁷⁷ He was charged with having been a supporter of the elder Adams, a friend of the Bank, and an unsympathetic aristocrat who had voted to sell white men for their debts, or as the journalists often phrased it, "into slavery" (a reference to his vote in the Ohio Senate in 1820-21 on a bill relating to impoverished debtors). The Democratic State Convention in January branded him "a Federalist of the old School, and supporter of the alien and sedition laws."⁷⁸

⁷⁶ *Western Hemisphere*, Apr. 29, 1835; *Cleveland Advertiser*, May 14, June 19, 1835.

⁷⁷ *Ohio State Journal*, Aug. 20, 1836; *Cleveland Advertiser*, Nov. 2, 1836.

⁷⁸ *Ohio State Journal*, Aug. 13, Sept. 2, Oct. 15, 1836.

Van Buren, on the other hand, was denounced with equal versatility, as a radical, a leader of "promoters of rioting and violence—the advocates of infidelity and agrarianism—the devoted partisans of anarchy," and as an aristocrat. When the Democratic press termed Granger a "pompous princely nabob" the reply came back that Van Buren had "more gold headed canes and white silk stockings than ever Francis Granger thought of." Van Buren with "a three thousand dollar coach, imported from England" and drawn by "four horses of the best blood, attended by servants in rich liveries, and outriders" was contrasted with "the plain old farmer of North Bend," accustomed to riding "on a pacing pony of not more than fifty dollars' value, without a liveried servant."⁷⁹ Van Buren had opposed the continuation of the Cumberland Road, the improvement of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, and the granting of universal suffrage. One editor, in declaring for Harrison, asserted that Van Buren had "by his votes in Congress ever opposed western interests and evinced a deadly hostility to every measure calculated for the improvement of the western country."⁸⁰ Van Buren's relations as secretary of state with the officials of the Catholic Church gave opportunity for the display of considerable religious prejudice. In June a Columbus paper declared that Van Buren's flattery of the Pope had been "a little too whole hog for the Pope himself to swallow," and a few weeks later a Whig meeting at Hamilton asserted:

"It is too palpable to be denied that Martin Van Buren has sought foreign aid to secure his election. His letter to the Pope of Rome, is at once ridiculous and disgusting. . . . His right under the glorious provisions of our Government, to *prefer* the Catholic Religion, is unquestionable; but merely to make pretensions, for no other than electioneering purposes, is as unhallowed as it is dishonorable."⁸¹ Wide circulation was given to the assertion that

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, Mar. 21, Oct. 8, 1836; *Cleveland Herald*, Sept. 24, 1836.

⁸⁰ *Columbus Ohio People's Press*, May 25, Aug. 24, June 15, July 27, 1836; *Hamilton (Ohio) Intelligencer*, Oct. 6, Nov. 3, 1836.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, Aug. 18, 1836; *Ohio People's Press*, June 15, 29, July 27, Aug. 10, 1836.

Van Buren had strong prejudices in favor of Catholicism, so that in June a resident of north central Ohio wrote directly to the Vice-President to try to ascertain the truth of the charges. The reply came back that the reports were "without the slightest foundation in truth," yet the Whigs continued to assert that Van Buren had "endeavored to soap down" the Catholics.⁸²

Apparently the Democrats felt that the only way to meet such charges was to reply in kind. Hence, the story was circulated that Harrison had said at Portsmouth that he believed he would receive a large support from the Catholics in and near Cincinnati. More extravagant manipulators of propaganda tried to prove that Harrison himself was a Catholic, citing as evidence a treaty with the head chiefs and warriors of the Kaskaskia tribe at Vincennes, August 13, 1803, in which Harrison, as United States commissioner, agreed to grant \$300 toward the erection of a Catholic church and \$100 for each of seven years for a priest.⁸³

The results of the election in November showed that Van Buren had carried the customarily Democratic counties of southwestern Ohio, Hamilton, Butler, Clermont, Brown, and Adams and practically all of the counties in the east central part from the Pennsylvania line westward, where Democratic influence from the "Keystone" state was particularly strong. The Democratic numerical superiority also extended southward into a group of counties between the Muskingum and Scioto rivers (Pickaway, Fairfield, Perry, Hocking, and Licking). Pike, a rather unproductive region of the lower Scioto Valley and seven counties in the less populous northwestern and western parts of the State, completed the list of Democratic conquests. Harrison carried, in general, the normally anti-Jackson counties and a number of those that had gone for Jackson in 1832. Van Buren received a majority in Hamilton County (Harrison's home) of over two hundred more than the normal Democratic margin, but the Western Reserve gave

⁸² Noah Wilson to Van Buren, Findlay, Ohio, June 8, 1835, Van Buren MSS.; Van Buren to Wilson, Washington, June 20, 1835, *ibid.*; *Western Hemisphere*, Sept. 7, 1836.

⁸³ *Ohio State Journal*, Sept. 10, Oct. 15, 1836.

Harrison a majority of about 7,400, and the latter in the State as a whole polled 105,405 votes to 96,948 for Van Buren, with a majority nearly twice as great as that of Jackson over Clay in 1832.⁸⁴ The Whig press explained Van Buren's loss of Ohio by the specie circular issued during the summer of 1836, providing that land purchased from the Government must be paid for in specie, and by his objections to the distribution of the Federal surplus revenue among the states. Dawson, however, asserted that the failure had been due to misrepresentation, compromised principles, party treason, and monopolistic influence.⁸⁵

The distribution bill, finally accepted by Jackson as the deposit bill, probably had had its effect. On April 7, 1836, Sherrod Williams, a rather obscure Whig Congressman from Kentucky, had sent to Harrison, Van Buren, and White a letter purported to have been framed for Harrison's benefit. The communication asked each candidate to declare himself on several important issues including the distribution among the states of the surplus revenue, the distribution of the proceeds of Federal land sales, the appropriation of money by Congress to improve navigable streams, a new bank charter, and the expunging from the records of a house of Congress of any of its proceedings. Harrison replied that he approved of the distribution of the surplus revenue and of the proceeds of land sales, Clay's pet projects; that he could only approve of appropriations for internal improvements which were national in character; that he would sign a bill for a bank if the public interest required it; and that he did not believe it constitutional to expunge from the record of a house of Congress any of its proceedings.⁸⁶ Van Buren, however, declared against distribution of Federal funds among the states, a position which seemed to show a lack of support for internal improvements. This stand was so unpopular in Ohio that one paper remarked, "If after this he can get the

⁸⁴ *Cincinnati Gazette*, Nov. 7, 1836; *Belmont Chronicle*, Nov. 26, 1836; *Western Courier*, Nov. 24, 1836.

⁸⁵ *Cincinnati Gazette*, Nov. 14, 1836; *Cincinnati Advertiser*, Nov. 12, 1836.

⁸⁶ Goebel, *Harrison*, 316-7.

votes of the people he must be a magician." Few Democratic newspapers in Ohio published Van Buren's reply, and apparently none attempted to justify his opposition to distribution.⁸⁷

Harrison's success in Ohio, moreover, was due in part to his being represented as the truly democratic candidate, while Van Buren was pictured as an aristocrat, and in part to religious prejudices. There had been heated divisions in the Democratic ranks. In the Cincinnati district, the "hard" and "soft" money Democrats had been at odds. Dawson, a member of the former group, had used his influence against David T. Disney, former speaker of the Ohio Senate and director of the Ohio Life Insurance and Trust Company, for Congress, and this had resulted in a bitter attack upon Dawson through the columns of the Cincinnati *Republican*.⁸⁸ In addition, a feud had developed between Thomas Morris, Democratic United States senator from Ohio and Congressman Thomas L. Hamer, at least in part, because Morris had introduced several abolition petitions from citizens of Ohio into the United States Senate. Though as a young man Hamer had lived in Morris's home and had studied law in his office, even the friends of the former became unacceptable to Morris, who in order to discredit Hamer, procured private letters previously written by him in order to show that he had favored McLean before becoming a Van Buren man.⁸⁹ Morris was a rabid antislavery man, who according to Hamer, had become so "universally odious" as never again to be able to gain the "confidence of his Party"; Hamer, on the other hand, was described by Hammond, not without justification, as one having a "clear, strong, vigorous, discriminating mind" but one who "for the sake of gratifying personal ambition, lends himself to base party purposes, whenever, by so doing, he can secure consideration for himself, with his party."⁹⁰

⁸⁷ *Belmont Chronicle*, Sept. 3, 1836; *Ohio People's Press*, Oct. 1, 12, 1836.

⁸⁸ *Cincinnati Advertiser*, Sept. 10, 14, 1836.

⁸⁹ Thomas Morris, *Life*, ed. by B. F. Morris (Cincinnati, 1856), 191, 398; Gallagher to McLean, Washington, June 15, 1836, McLean MSS.; Thomas L. Hamer to Van Buren, Georgetown, Sept. 22, 1836, Van Buren MSS.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*; *Cincinnati Gazette*, Nov. 16, 1836; *Cleveland Herald*, Sept. 24, 1836.

In the Presidential election of 1836, Ohio's vote for Harrison did not agree with the opinion of the country as a whole, for Van Buren won a majority in the Nation's electoral college. In spite of the hard feelings of the campaign, however, the Ohio Whigs felt no alarm, and the *Ohio State Journal* admitted: "Without deeming him [Van Buren] to possess extraordinary abilities, we believe he is sufficiently qualified to discharge with tolerable credit the duties appertaining to the Executive office. He is a pretty good judge of men; and has tact and experience enough to enable him to guide the ship of State safely through the various dangers which may beset her course."⁹¹ The same paper even welcomed a respite from party warfare. But such was not to be the case for long.⁹²

⁹¹ *Ohio State Journal*, Dec. 6, 1836.

⁹² *Ibid.*, Feb. 7, June 9, 16, 23, July 7, 1837; *Cincinnati Gazette*, Jan. 31, July 8, 1837.

CHAPTER XII

A Panic and Its Aftermath

SHORTLY after the legislature had organized early in December, with all officers Democrats except the doorkeeper and sergeant-at-arms of the House, the dominant party wished to turn to the choice of a successor to Thomas Ewing in the United States Senate. To the Whigs this was a bitter task, for the Democratic majority was very small, and the Whigs contended that it had been secured by the Reapportionment Act. If the Democrats were not united, however, the Whigs might still have a chance. Hence, Alfred Kelley (Whig) spoke in the Ohio House against the caucus system, which he claimed tended to defeat the popular will, but the Democrats knew the value of party discipline. The following Democratic leaders were urged for the place: the retiring governor, Robert Lucas; Robert T. Lytle, ex-congressman, from Hamilton County; David T. Disney, retiring speaker of the State Senate; John M. Goodenow, a prominent jurist of Cincinnati; William Allen of Chillicothe; Judge Benjamin Tappan of Steubenville; and Judge Reuben Wood of Cleveland.¹ Lucas had gained considerable reputation as the defender of Ohio's contentions in the Michigan boundary dispute, but by the Christmas season of 1836 a considerable movement had developed for Allen, and the former governor was called back from his Piketon home to repair his political fences in Columbus. Ice in the Scioto River, however, interfered with transportation via Chillicothe, and he was delayed in his return.²

As usual, Jackson Day, January 8, was the occasion of a great Democratic gathering at Columbus. At the banquet in the evening, Lucas and Lytle spoke, the latter delivering a witty after

¹ *Cincinnati Gazette*, Dec. 31, 1836.

² J. C. Parish, *Robert Lucas* (Iowa City, 1907), 153-4.

dinner speech which was ineffective for the purposes of the occasion. At the end of the program, Allen who had received an invitation only late in the day as a mark of appreciation of his campaign services, was asked to make a few remarks. With characteristic boldness, he attacked the Whig Party and its recent standard-bearer in Ohio, William Henry Harrison, and his forceful presentation immediately won him the support of many older Democratic spokesmen.³

The Whigs, in the meantime, dreaded the almost inevitable result of the senatorial election. Since the State Constitution required the presence of two-thirds of the members of each house for a quorum in such an election, Charles Hammond suggested that the Whigs absent themselves. By refusing to meet with the Senate, from December 8, 1836, to January 18, 1837, the Whigs in the House delayed the choice of a senator until public opinion became aroused. When the joint session had finally been agreed upon, the Democratic caucus met at "the Gourd" rather than at the Tontine Coffee House. On the first ballot in the party gathering Lucas received 15 votes; Wood, 12; Allen, 11; Goodenow, 10; Tappan, 6. But the trend then turned in Allen's favor; he finally received fifty-three votes; and the party became pledged to support him for the senatorship. Subsequently, in the legislature, Ewing received the support of the fifty-two Whigs. On the Democratic side, however, three legislators, who had steadily opposed Allen in caucus and were now desirous of furthering Wood's prospects, held out against Allen, hoping that the Whigs might unite with them in the election of Wood. On the twelfth ballot, however, one of the trio yielded; another did likewise on the next ballot, and Allen was eventually chosen.⁴

As the youngest senator from any state, being only a few months over the constitutional requirement of thirty years, Allen was warmly praised by the Democratic newspapers as "a firm, unwavering democrat" of "talents and oratorical powers of the high-

³ R. C. McGrane, *William Allen* (Columbus, 1925), 49-51.

⁴ Hamilton (Ohio) *Intelligencer*, Jan. 18, 26, 1837.

est order.”⁵ The Whigs bemoaned “the degradation of the State.” The *Ohio State Journal* insisted that the new senator was “a man of loose morals and irregular habits; and quite as celebrated for his Bacchanalian revels as for his oratorical powers.”⁶ The Circle-ville (Ohio) *Herald* described him as a “radical politician of the Bentonian school,” and a Mt. Vernon, Ohio, paper called him “a brawling demagogue notorious only for falsehood and fraud.” “Time was when demagogues did not aspire to a seat in the United States Senate; now they are favorite candidates,” was the comment of the *Cleveland Gazette*.⁷ The fact that Allen had been elected to Congress by a single vote in 1832 and had been twice defeated, the last time in the preceding November by William K. Bond, led to the claim that the popular will had been definitely disregarded by the “iniquitous” apportionment act of the previous winter. Allen himself was accused of concocting the reapportionment, but this was definitely denied by the chairman of the committee which had reported the measure.⁸ The Democrats planned a great celebration to honor their new senator.⁹

As to the retiring senator, Ewing, the *Toledo Blade* expressed the opinion: “His late defeat is the highest compliment his enemies could have paid him; they could not endure the man whose penetrating eye could fathom the depth of their enormities and whose unsparing hand could expose them to view.”¹⁰

The Ohio legislature was deeply concerned with getting and spending Ohio's share of the Federal funds which were being distributed among the states. The Deposit Act, signed by Andrew Jackson in June, 1836, had provided that all Federal funds above five million dollars in the Treasury on January 1, 1837, should be divided among the states in proportion to their representation in the electoral college and distributed to them in four quarterly in-

⁵ Columbus (Ohio) *Western Hemisphere*, Jan. 18, 1837.

⁶ Jan. 20, 31, 1837.

⁷ Columbus *Ohio State Journal*, Feb. 10, 1837.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Jan. 31, 1837; McGrane, *William Allen*, 52 note.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 53.

¹⁰ *Ohio State Journal*, Feb. 10, 1837.

stallments. During the summer and fall of 1836 Whig meetings and newspapers throughout the State had suggested how Ohio's share should be spent. Turnpikes, canals, and common schools were mentioned as proper beneficiaries, while the payment of the State debt, the division of the money among the counties, and the establishment of a State bank each had its advocates.¹¹ Governor Joseph Vance, in his inaugural address of December, 1836, added his voice to the demand of those wishing to use a part, at least, for the building up of the common schools.¹² Committees of the House and Senate urged the investment of the money in bank stock, and this view was favored also by the *Ohio State Journal*. Alfred Kelley, of the house committee, advocated a Bank of Ohio, capitalized at \$5,000,000, with a charter to run until 1870 and with numerous branches. He opposed the loaning of money by the State to incorporate railroads or other stock companies, a project having some support, on the grounds that the State could not command the funds when needed. Loans to counties in proportion to population, the counties to loan the funds to individuals on real estate security or to joint stock companies on proper security, were also rejected because of the expense of examining titles.¹³ Hammond strongly advocated the diverting of the funds to internal improvement projects, whereby the advantage would accrue to "every owner of real estate, every manufacturer," and to other citizens, while distribution to banks would benefit only the stockholders.¹⁴ The Western Reserve gave strong support to this view.¹⁵ Those favoring the bank proposal contended that the money invested in bank stock would yield about ten per cent. per annum, half of which could be used for the common school fund and the rest for interest on a loan for internal improvements. If otherwise invested the return would probably be only five per

¹¹ *Ibid.*, Aug. 20, 27, Sept. 2, 1836; *Cleveland Herald*, Nov. 23, Dec. 2, 1836.

¹² *Ohio State Journal*, Dec. 16, 1836.

¹³ *Ibid.*, Feb. 10, 28, 1837; *Cincinnati Gazette*, Jan. 10, 1837.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Jan. 10, Feb. 9, 1837.

¹⁵ Ravenna (Ohio) *Western Courier*, Dec. 8, 1836; *Cleveland Advertiser*, Dec. 29, 1836; *Cleveland Herald*, Jan. 12, 27, 1837.

cent. so that school fund money would have to be raised by taxation.¹⁶ Popular prejudice, however, was against the investment of the money in banks, and a minority of Kelley's committee opposed any investment in financial institutions, even a State bank, and urged internal improvements as the most unobjectionable means of disposing of it.¹⁷

"Individual cupidity" was at work in advocating schemes favorable to special interests, and the resulting legislation (of March 28, 1837) was something of a compromise. Ohio's share was to be distributed among the counties of the State in proportion to the number of free inhabitants over twenty-one years of age. The county commissioners were to act as a board of fund commissioners vested with exclusive control of the revenue. The net annual income was to be applied to the encouragement of common schools within the State. The commissioners were empowered to loan money to any incorporated canal, railroad, or turnpike company, or to other internal improvement projects within the county. Security was to be required equal to double the amount loaned. Borrowers were to pay six per cent. interest, five-sixths to be devoted to the encouragement of common schools within the county. The fund commissioners, however, were permitted to loan to the State any amount which it desired to borrow and which had not been loaned within the county. In case the money could not be loaned in such ways, it could be loaned to individuals at a rate of interest not exceeding seven per cent., and not under six per cent. Loans were to fall due not later than January, 1850, when the fund commissioners were to have the principal of the loan in their hands, subject to the order of the State treasurer for the payment of the State canal debt, should the legislature deem it advisable to use the surplus revenue for that purpose. In the meantime, if any county did not avail itself of the opportunity to use its portion of the money, the State auditor had authority to loan that part to the canal fund, for a period not exceeding eighteen

¹⁶ *Cincinnati Gazette*, Feb. 16, 1837.

¹⁷ *Ohio State Journal*, Mar. 7, 1837.

months at six per cent. per annum, until claimed by the counties entitled to the same.¹⁸

The share of Ohio in the distribution was estimated at \$2,676,394.14, but the economic depression of 1837 prevented the payment of the full amount to any state, and Ohio received \$2,007,260. The counties used their portions for various purposes. Loans were made to individuals in Butler, Coshocton, Clinton, Clermont, Delaware, Darke, Guernsey, Hamilton, Hancock, Lorain, Montgomery, Medina, Marion, Preble, and Stark counties. In Belmont, Champaign, Clark, Fairfield, Greene, Jefferson, Logan, and Trumbull the money was loaned to banks or invested in their stock. In Portage County a loan to a Cleveland bank was contemplated, but such objections were raised that it was decided to loan one-half of the county's share to the State and the rest to the county itself and to individuals. Cuyahoga loaned its share to the Cleveland and Warren Railroad Company, and Licking divided its part among the town of Newark, the county, and the Newark and Mt. Vernon Railroad. Highland loaned its portion to the State, but in the State as a whole, little was transferred to the canal fund or loaned to the State.¹⁹

By May, 1837, such evidences of prosperity as the distribution among the states of a Federal surplus faded before ominous signs of financial depression. The crisis of 1833-1834, precipitated by the contracting of loans by the Bank of the United States, including the branch at Cincinnati, had been eased in Ohio by the creation of new banking facilities under Ohio charters, and had almost been forgotten after the great Bank at Philadelphia had abandoned its policy of the curtailment of loans in September, 1834. The more lenient attitude of the United States Bank had been due to a realization that after its Federal charter would expire in 1836 it could continue to function, in a limited way, under a charter

¹⁸ E. L. Bogart, *Internal Improvements and State Debt in Ohio* (New York, 1924), 41-5.

¹⁹ Cincinnati *Gazette*, May 9, 1837; St. Clairsville (Ohio) *Belmont Chronicle*, May 16, 1837; C. C. Huntington and C. P. McClelland, *Ohio Canals, Their Construction, Cost, Use and Partial Abandonment* (Columbus, 1905), 74.

authorized by the legislature of Pennsylvania.²⁰ Antibank Democrats in Ohio charged that bribery was the means of getting the new charter (of March, 1836), but the *Ohio State Journal*, representative of the Whig press, refuted such allegations as "destitute of even the shadow of foundation" and tartly suggested that the people of Pennsylvania were "perfectly competent to deliberate and act for themselves on all questions affecting their interests."²¹

In general, after 1834 conditions seemed favorable to business, and land speculators were particularly aggressive in pushing their ambitious plans. In northwestern Ohio, the whole Maumee Valley was the scene of feverish activities. The village of Toledo was incorporated, and a number of leaders of the Whig Party in Ohio such as Elisha Whittlesey hoped for large financial benefits from their investments in the vicinity.²² But the year 1837 brought a crushing blow. Speculation and trading had been carried to absurd lengths, and investments had been made in unproductive operations. The removal of the United States deposits from the Bank of the United States in 1833 had probably promoted this tendency, for Federal funds had then been placed in "pet banks," which loaned the money, in some cases, for unwarranted projects. The distribution of the surplus among the states, moreover, had prompted some unwise undertakings with the funds provided. Jackson during the summer of 1836 had realized that all was not going well and had issued in July the Specie Circular which required the payment of all land purchases in gold and silver. This resulted in excited demands upon the western banks for specie, and these in turn pressed similar demands upon the eastern financial institutions. The situation was aggravated by financial troubles in England which resulted in the calling of American loans and by an unfavorable balance of trade which drained specie from American shores to settle accounts in Europe. The inevitable

²⁰ R. C. McGrane, *Panic of 1837* (Chicago, 1924), 70.

²¹ *Ohio State Journal*, Mar. 1, 1836.

²² H. E. Davis, "Economic Basis of Ohio Politics, 1820-1840," *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, XLVII, 313-4.

result was the suspension of specie payment by the banks in New York on May 10, 1837. This was promptly followed by a suspension by banks elsewhere in the country, and Ohio was no exception. Here it was impossible to convert resources into coin, in view of previous suspension by banks elsewhere.²³

In Cincinnati, news of the suspension of specie payments in New York and Philadelphia resulted in a meeting of the presidents, cashiers, and directors of the five banks in the community on May 17. It was decided to suspend immediately in the Queen City. A public meeting at College Edifice Hall approved such a course, and Hammond through the *Gazette* viewed it as "judicious" under the existing circumstances. A public meeting in Cleveland adopted a similar stand.²⁴ In Columbus, Samuel Medary, prominent Democratic politician and editor, wrote to Martin Van Buren that the stoppage of specie payments along the seaboard had created a shock but only a momentary one in Ohio's capital city. The *Western Hemisphere* of that city (edited by Medary) counseled against an excitement toward banks and added encouragingly, "Our own [banks] are strictly solvent, and ought to be a salve for many misdeeds."²⁵ In the main, newspapers of all political beliefs attempted to prevent hysterical demonstrations, though some Democratic papers blamed the difficulties upon the misdeeds of banking interests while the Whig press threw the burden of guilt upon the national Administration. The *Ohio State Journal* called for the immediate resignation of every member of the cabinet who had "advised or participated in the iniquitous policy" of the preceding years.²⁶ Obviously it was easier to apportion blame than to formulate plans for averting difficulties in the future. Far-sighted editors had earlier expressed concern over large scale speculation, but in the

²³ C. C. Huntington, "History of Banking and Currency in Ohio before the Civil War," *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, XXIV, 156-9; *Cincinnati Gazette*, May 9, 1837.

²⁴ *Cincinnati Gazette*, May 17, 18, 1837; *Cleveland Herald and Gazette*, May 19, 1837.

²⁵ Samuel Medary to Martin Van Buren, May 18, 1837, Van Buren MSS.; *Western Hemisphere*, May 17, 1837.

²⁶ May 26, 1837.

midst of the panic one writer in the *Cincinnati Gazette* observed that it was not hard to denounce overtrading, yet to destroy it would destroy "all the principles which support civil liberty." Overtrading, according to this commentator, was "simply an over-exertion of those faculties which have built our cities, [and] brought into cultivation the fertile fields of the West."²⁷

An immediate problem, however, was the formulation of a definite and constructive program for the banks of Ohio, hence a convention of Ohio banks was held in Columbus June 5. Representatives of twenty-three of the thirty-five existing chartered banks in Ohio pledged themselves not to part with any of their institution's specie; to manage their affairs so as to be ready to resume payments in specie; to receive for debts the notes of all banks represented in the convention; to discountenance the improvident issuing of paper money; to pay out the currency of other banks in preference to that of their own institution so as to reduce the circulation; and to furnish the other banks with a certified statement of the condition of their bank every sixty days.²⁸ After a time some complaints were made that the banks were not selling exchange on eastern banks except for their own notes, but the banks had not specifically promised to accept the notes of other banks for that purpose. As to the suspension of specie payment, by the middle of June the Ohio Life Insurance and Trust Company found it imperative to resume such payments, for its charter prohibited, under penalty of forfeiture, a suspension for more than thirty days. Accordingly, it resumed specie payment on June 14. Locofoco (antibank) newspapers assumed that other Ohio banks had forfeited their charters because of a refusal to redeem their notes in gold or silver, but the bank charters in Ohio generally provided that such charters should be surrendered only when proof of suspension had been received from a court of record. Such action, under the stress of conditions in 1837, was not practical.²⁹

²⁷ *Cincinnati Gazette*, June 5, 1837; *Columbus Ohio People's Press*, June 29, 1836.

²⁸ *Ohio State Journal*, June 9, 1837; Huntington, "History of Banking," 160.

²⁹ *Ohio State Journal*, Aug. 11, Oct. 27, 1837; *Western Hemisphere*, June 21, 1837.

It has been estimated that the money supply in the United States had increased from 93 to 222 millions during the years from 1830 to 1837.³⁰ Statistics, however, were incomplete and not entirely accurate. In Ohio not all banks were required to make regular reports to the State auditor. A report made by the secretary of the treasury in January, 1836, as to the condition of banks in Ohio during the previous year indicates that twenty-eight banks in the State had a circulation in paper money of \$5,654,048 against specie of \$1,916,715. A considerable inflation of the currency of Ohio banks occurred during 1835-36, and during the latter year reached \$9,675,644, a high mark not again attained until 1850.³¹

By the Ohio law of March 14, 1836, a prohibitive tax of 20% on annual dividends had been placed on banks issuing or circulating bills of less than \$5 after July 4, 1837. With the suspension of specie payment a delicate problem arose in regard to small change. Either coin or currency in small denominations was necessary for the ready conduct of business transactions, but with the suspension of specie payment there was a tendency to hoard small metallic coins or to transport them to the East at a profit.³² Two banks, the Commercial Bank and the Franklin Bank of Cincinnati were exempt from the prohibitions of the small note law because of their charter provisions, and three banks, the Urbana Banking Company, the Bank of Circleville, and the Miami Exporting Company, neglected or refused to surrender the right to issue the small notes. Hence substantial citizens of Cincinnati complained in September that certain persons were passing 25- and 50-cent notes of the Urbana bank. That institution, like the Miami Exporting Company, had previously failed and been revived and may have had little to worry about as to any tax on its dividends. The Cincinnati *Gazette* issued a warning, "Just as soon as the 50 cent Urbana notes are encouraged, small change will disappear, and a thousand different kinds of tickets will take their place."³³ Cir-

³⁰ Huntington, "History of Banking," 358.

³¹ Quoted in *ibid.*, 375, 377.

³² Cincinnati *Gazette*, May 25, 1837; Columbus *Ohio Statesman*, Dec. 6, 1837.

³³ Cincinnati *Gazette*, Sept. 21, 1837.

cumstances indeed offered tempting opportunities for manufacturing and other business concerns to issue fractional currency or "shinplasters." But, when the Steubenville and Cadiz Turnpike Company in June attempted to follow such a course, a public meeting at Steubenville passed resolutions in opposition. "Shinplasters," nevertheless, were issued in Circleville, Chillicothe, Lancaster, Somerset, Thornville, Marietta, and Zanesville, as well as Urbana.³⁴ By fall the New York *Times* cynically commented that there was said to be a quarter dollar of change in Cincinnati, and that had been borrowed so often to pay postage that it had been "worn down to a pistareen." To this the Cincinnati *Gazette* replied, "To be serious, Cincinnati, by steadily resisting shin plaster change has got along pretty well; while New York is said to be literally overrun with all manner of creeping things."³⁵ At any rate, small change was scarce, as was indicated by the advertisement of the house of Shillito and Pullan of Cincinnati in November for five-, six-and-a-quarter, ten-, and twelve-and-a-half-cent pieces at a premium.³⁶

According to the report of the State auditor, the circulation of authorized banks in Ohio in January, 1837, had been \$8,326,974.80 with specie on hand to the amount of \$3,153,334.94. By May (the month of suspension) the circulation had decreased to \$7,697,261.30 and the specie on hand to \$2,311,614.44. Thereafter, specie was definitely at a premium, which amounted to ten per cent. in September, but was then declining. During the summer the New York *Herald* estimated that the relation of bank circulation to specie in Ohio on June 6 was \$2.80 to 1. In December, according to the report of the State auditor, the circulation of Ohio banks had decreased to \$6,221,136.90 while the specie on hand had increased to \$2,674,212.69.³⁷ By November the Dayton

³⁴ *Western Hemisphere*, June 21, 1837; *Ohio Statesman*, Aug. 2, 1837.

³⁵ *Cincinnati Gazette*, Oct. 5, 1837.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, Nov. 20, 1837.

³⁷ Quoted in Huntington, "History of Banking," 388-9; *Cincinnati Gazette*, Aug. 9, Oct. 2, 1837.

Bank and the Clinton Bank of Columbus had resumed specie payments, and Gustavus Swan, president of the Franklin Bank of Columbus, wrote to the Bank Committee of New York banks that his institution was able and ready to resume specie payment whenever the principal banks of the Eastern Seaboard determined upon such a policy.³⁸

The State elections in October were not particularly exciting, for no contest for the Presidency or governorship was involved, but the economic depression undoubtedly redounded to the advantage of the Whigs. The panic of 1837, with the attendant curtailment of American business, had caused considerable distress to Ohio business interests especially in the larger cities. Merchants were thrown into bankruptcy; a few manufacturing plants were closed, and others found the demand for their products severely lessened. Strikes were at least threatened, as wages were reduced, and a protest was registered in Cincinnati against employers who went "to a concert for the benefit of the indigent poor" and then proceeded to reduce the wages of their workmen two or three dollars a week.³⁹ Most Ohioans, however, were then living under such a simple agrarian economy that the obtaining of the rudimentary essentials of life was not seriously affected by the vicissitudes of financial centers. The crops of 1837 were abundant in Ohio, and much of the building program essential to the development of a relatively young commonwealth went forward in spite of the financial reverses experienced by easterners in seaboard cities. Cincinnati continued to be a busy center of commercial and industrial activity; the Cleveland newspapers in regard to the unemployment problem seemed chiefly concerned with the laying off of workmen in Pittsburgh; and one commentator in central Ohio suggested that the people in the vicinity of Columbus were totally ignorant of the suffering that was being experienced in New York, where their aid was greatly needed.⁴⁰

³⁸ *Ohio State Journal*, Nov. 3, 1837.

³⁹ Cincinnati *Chronicle*, in Cincinnati *Gazette*, July 3, 1837; letters of "A Journeyman Cooper" and "A Journeyman Cordwainer" in *ibid.*, June 7, 9, 1837.

⁴⁰ "Pro Bono Publico," in *Ohio State Journal*, Oct. 13, 1837.

Immediately after the suspension of specie payment in May an order was issued by the Canal Fund Commission to the Board of Public Works for the suspension of construction on the Hocking Valley Canal, the Walhonding Canal, and other internal improvements, but the Lancaster (Ohio) Bank at once offered the State a loan of \$50,000 that the Hocking Valley project might be continued. During the summer of 1837, moreover, confidence was such in New York business circles as to Ohio's credit that a loan for the continuance of the State's internal improvements was effected at a premium of twelve and one-half per cent., and thereafter contracts were awarded for the carrying out of the ambitious plans.⁴¹ At the same time the confidence of private investors in Ohio was shown by the progress that was made in organizing the Little Miami Railroad, the promoters of which employed a surveyor to investigate the proposed route.⁴²

During the summer and fall numerous political meetings were held in various localities of the State. Democratic gatherings generally disapproved of a United States Bank, deprecated the issuing of "shinplasters," declared a substitution of gold and silver for bank notes to be the best corrective for currency evils, and expressed the belief that the existing banking system in Ohio, "by expelling specie from circulation and making the circulating medium of paper" had bestowed upon banking corporations "full control over the prices of property and labor."⁴³ Considerable difference of opinion existed among Ohio Democrats as to the future of paper money. A few would have abolished it gradually; others would have permitted its circulation in the locality of origin where public opinion could restrain abuses; and others approved the position of the Cleveland *Advertiser*:

"The Democratic party are [*sic*] not in favor of an exclusive metallic currency. But they are opposed strongly . . . to that system of Banking which has been practiced in this country for

⁴¹ Cincinnati *Gazette*, July 13, 1837.

⁴² *Ohio State Journal*, May 26, 1837; Cincinnati *Gazette*, Aug. 14, 1837.

⁴³ *Ohio Statesman*, July 12, 1837.

the last few years. . . . The Democracy are [*sic*] so far in favor of a metallic currency as to secure and protect the public from the abuses [to] which the present system is subject."⁴⁴ The one important Democratic paper in Ohio that came to the defense of the banking fraternity of the State was the Cincinnati *Republican*, dominated by Micajah T. Williams and the Ohio Life Insurance and Trust Company.⁴⁵

When Congress met on September 5, Van Buren in a special message outlined his views of the causes of the financial depression but disclaimed any governmental responsibility for the relieving of distress. He advocated the establishment of an independent treasury, the withholding of the last installment of the surplus, and the issuing of treasury notes to be redeemed by funds on deposit with the "pet banks." Moses Dawson at once wrote the President that the message had "raised the confidence of one portion of the democracy and fixed the wavering of another."⁴⁶ A Democratic meeting at Cincinnati at once endorsed Van Buren's stand and prompted Jackson to write, "The voice from Cincinnati, Ohio, of full approbation, will be the first that will meet your eye, but this same voice will arise from Maine to Louisiana."⁴⁷

Most of the Democratic papers in Ohio of course applauded the President's message. The Cincinnati *Advertiser* gladly accepted the title "Locofoco" when its opinions were sustained by such a message.⁴⁸ The anti-Locofoco Cincinnati *Republican*, however, wished to have the bank question dropped. It counseled: "Let the banks alone, and they will take care of themselves. They are not in a situation to do any harm; they may, if let alone, do something towards the public relief. . . . Let us clear our skirts of locofocoism, and unite upon the principles which have sustained us

⁴⁴ July 22, 1837.

⁴⁵ *Ohio State Journal*, Oct. 6, 1837; Moses Dawson to Andrew Jackson, Dec. 4, 1837, Jackson MSS.

⁴⁶ Cincinnati, Sept. 9, 1837, Van Buren MSS.

⁴⁷ To Van Buren, Nashville, Sept. 14, 1837, *ibid*.

⁴⁸ Sept. 13, 1837.

in former times.”⁴⁹ The Whig *Ohio State Journal* ridiculed the majority of Ohio Democrats, who, it said, went for “the Benton gold humbug” and professed to be against banks altogether.⁵⁰

Allen voted for the subtreasury when it came to a vote in the Senate in October, but Senator Thomas Morris was absent from the roll-call, though it was charged he had been seen in the chamber a few minutes before the vote was taken.⁵¹ The bill was tabled in the lower house until the next session. Before adjourning in October, however, Congress voted to carry out the President’s suggestion to withhold the last installment of the surplus revenue, and both Ohio senators helped pass the measure. The Whig newspapers of the State clamored for the expected allotment (though the Federal Government would have been compelled to borrow additional funds to meet such a disbursement).

In the fall of 1837 there were nine “pet banks” in Ohio which had Federal deposits, the Clinton Bank of Columbus, the Franklin Bank of the same city, the Franklin Bank of Cincinnati, the Commercial Bank of Cincinnati, the Commercial Bank of Lake Erie (Cleveland), the Bank of Cleveland, and the banks of Wooster, Zanesville, and Chillicothe.⁵² A bill before Congress would have required the banks to pay back Federal deposits within eight months. Even Moses Dawson feared that the period was too short for western banks, which had loaned the money to traders who were accustomed to repaying the loans in ten per cent. installments. Any demand for a greater amount at one time, he said, would lead to financial embarrassment and even bankruptcy.⁵³ The legislation finally left the settlement of the questions of interest and delay in payment to the discretion of the secretary of the treasury.⁵⁴ The *Cincinnati Gazette* expressed the Whig reaction in Ohio to the “quasi-majority” of Congress which had supported

⁴⁹ Quoted in *Cincinnati Gazette*, Oct. 6, 1837.

⁵⁰ Oct. 6, 1837.

⁵¹ *Ohio State Journal*, Oct. 20, 1837.

⁵² *Cincinnati Gazette*, Sept. 23, 1837.

⁵³ Dawson to James K. Polk, Cincinnati, Sept. 29, 1837, Polk MSS.

⁵⁴ *Ohio State Journal*, Nov. 3, 1837.

Van Buren's proposals, by denouncing its program "to rob the states of the fourth installment of the surplus—to issue a lot of National Shin-plasters, and to bind the Pet Banks and cast them into the fiery furnace," and added, "There was not quite enough to set up the great, principal idol, the Sub-Treasury Bill."⁵⁵ In a year of financial panic a reaction against the party in power was to be expected. In Ohio, the fall elections favored the Whigs and the *Ohio State Journal* exclaimed: "Ohio is effectually purified from the taint Vanocracy. She is Whig now at the heart, and from the heart to every extremity. In her legislative, her executive, and her judiciary powers, she is now essentially Whig. . . . No supporter of the powers that be, feared such a result; no Whig, sanguine as our party was of success, dared to anticipate success like this."⁵⁶ The new legislature which met in December was composed of twenty Whig and sixteen Democratic senators, and forty Whig and twenty-two Democratic representatives.⁵⁷ Similar results occurred in New York and New Jersey, and Dawson wrote to Jackson to inquire whether he did not think that there had been a distinct change in public opinion. "Believing as I do in the Treasury Bill," explained Dawson, "I have much anxiety as to its fate."⁵⁸ Jackson replied that, in his opinion, there was no reason for despair.⁵⁹

Ohio Whigs praised the message of Governor Joseph Vance (elected in 1836) to the State legislature which convened on December 4. He pointed out that the American people were paying dearly for the war on the Bank of the United States. Ohioans were paying heavier taxes for State, county, road and school purposes than the people of any other state, but for such assessments were receiving ample benefits, while they had nothing to show for the "high premiums on exchanges, exorbitant interest on money,

⁵⁵ Oct. 20, 1837.

⁵⁶ Oct. 20, 1837.

⁵⁷ *Cincinnati Gazette*, Oct. 18, 1837; *Ohio State Journal*, Oct. 20, 27, 1837.

⁵⁸ Letter dated Cincinnati, Dec. 4, 1837, Jackson MSS.

⁵⁹ Jackson to Dawson, Hermitage, Dec. 9, 1837, *ibid.*

and heavy losses on depreciated Bank paper" resulting from the "wanton war" on the Bank. The governor called for a stabilizing of the State banking system by congressional action which would repeal the Specie Circular and extend credit to the notes of all solvent banks. In Ohio, he advocated repeal of the law prohibiting the issue and circulation of small notes. He rejected the hard money arguments and paid high tribute to the stability of the existing Ohio banks, whose note circulation in the six months from May to November had decreased from \$8,083,361 to \$5,786,073 and whose specie had increased from \$2,386,221 to \$2,665,220. The governor urged that the money received by the Federal Government from the sale of public lands should be used for education and common schools. He emphasized the importance of public works for the prosperity of the people and pointed out how, under the State law of March 24, 1837, authorizing a loan of credit by the State of Ohio to railroad companies, and stock subscriptions by the State to the capital stock of turnpike, canal, and slack water navigation companies, he had subscribed, on behalf of the State, over \$900,000, approximately half for the Pennsylvania and Ohio Canal Company.⁶⁰ The *Ohio State Journal* hailed the message as "one of the strongest documents that has ever come from the Executive of Ohio," and the *Cincinnati Gazette* concurred.⁶¹ Democratic papers criticized the message for its extensive references to national political questions over which the State legislature had no control and for its enthusiasm for banks.⁶²

One measure of interest which was passed by the Whig legislature of 1837-8 was a law of March 19, 1838, outlawing imprisonment for debt.⁶³ An incident which created much commotion during the same session was the report of John A. Bryan, auditor of State. Bryan, formerly a Democratic editor at Columbus, was an efficient official. In his report he called attention to the large

⁶⁰ *Ohio State Journal*, Dec. 5, 1837.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, Dec. 15, 1837; *Cincinnati Gazette*, Dec. 7, 1837.

⁶² *Cleveland Advertiser*, Dec. 12, 1837; *Ohio Statesman*, Dec. 5, 1837.

⁶³ Ohio General Assembly, *House Journal*, 36 Assemb., 756, 837; *Senate Journal*, 36 Assemb., 747, 758.

expenditures of the State and the considerable number of banks and cited comparisons with other states. Since the State had large sums on deposit with the banks, he intimated that perhaps greater security should be given in the form of the individual liability of stockholders. These suggestions, cited by the Democratic press as evidence that Bryan dared "faithfully and honestly discharge his duty to the State and the people," aroused a furor among the Whig majority in the legislature. Alfred Kelley, a leading Columbus capitalist, introduced resolutions to refer back to the auditor the report so as "to expunge therefrom such parts as do not relate to the situation or duties of his office." This implied censure passed the House by a vote of 38 to 22. Bryan was charged with ambitions for the Democratic nomination for the governorship in January.⁶⁴

During this session of the legislature numerous proposals were introduced regarding the right of the legislature to alter or repeal the charters of corporations, the desirability of individual liability of stockholders in banks, and the repeal of the act prohibiting the issuing of small notes. The Whig majority successfully opposed the first proposal.⁶⁵ On the other two, the Democratic State Convention declared that while not desiring "to put them [State banks] out of their existence, or take away any of those powers and privileges, which of right belong to them . . . we look to the authorities of the State to impose such restrictions upon them as shall protect the people from a recurrence of present evils; that among these we recognize, particularly, the principle of individual liability on the part of stockholders, and a restriction of paper issues to something like a proper proportion of the actual specie basis."⁶⁶

The Whig majority, however, controlled practically all of the committees in both houses and was definitely friendly to the banking interests of the State. John H. James, chairman of the finance committee of the Senate, was president of the Bank of Urbana;

⁶⁴ *Cincinnati Gazette*, Dec. 11, 13, 1837; *Ohio Statesman*, Dec. 12, 23, 26, 1837.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, Jan. 20, 1838.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, Jan. 11, 1838.

Samuel Stokely, a member of the Senate Currency Committee was a director of the Steubenville Bank; and Alfred Kelley, chairman of the House Committee on Finance was a large stockholder and one time director of the Franklin Bank of Columbus and at the time a director of the Ohio Life Insurance and Trust Company at Cincinnati.⁶⁷ Numerous other legislators were interested in Ohio banks. Among them were Robert Neil, stockholder in the Franklin Bank of Columbus; John A. Foot, attorney for the Commercial Bank of Lake Erie and a stockholder in that bank and in the Bank of Cleveland; and Seabury Ford, a director and stockholder in the Western Reserve Bank.⁶⁸

The legislature refused to sanction a proposed investigation of Ohio banks to determine whether they had violated their charters by the suspension of specie payments and rejected the principle of individual liability for stockholders in banks. On the other hand, the legislature passed a measure to repeal the Ohio law of 1836 prohibiting the establishing within Ohio of any office, branch or agency of Biddle's Bank of the United States, which had operated since 1836 under a Pennsylvania charter. It also repealed the law passed by the Democrats in 1836 that prohibited small notes. This repeal measure, which was passed by a straight party vote, provided that such banks as had surrendered the right to issue notes of less than five dollars might again do so if they could redeem them in specie.⁶⁹ If the banks of New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore resumed specie payment by July 4, the Ohio banks were required to do likewise.

The eastern banks, however, did not resume specie payments by Independence Day but fixed the date for August 13, 1838. The Ohio banks, having announced that they were ready to take the step as soon as it had been done generally in the East, accepted this date. In Ohio no difficulty was experienced in carrying out resumption, less specie being paid out than was taken in by the

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, Jan. 30, 1838.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, Feb. 22, 1838.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, Mar. 13, 1838.

Franklin Bank of Columbus during the first three days after resumption.⁷⁰ The Farmers Bank of Canton had closed its doors about the first of April with a loss of approximately \$300,000 to the people of the community, but in general the effects of the financial depression gradually wore off. In May, 1838, the canal tolls were \$76,198.03 compared with \$50,499.61 in the previous May. In June a Columbus newspaper noted that prices were good, markets steady, and business "doubling," while in Cincinnati many new residences were being erected, and roads and canals were being constructed. In south central Ohio wheat was selling for \$1.00 to \$1.25 a bushel, pork for \$6 a hundredweight, and laborers were being paid \$30 per month.⁷¹

Among those suggested by the Democrats for the governorship in 1838 were Samuel Spangler of Fairfield County, John Thompson of Columbiana, Isaac Humphreys of Washington, Thomas L. Hamer of Brown, and John A. Bryan of Franklin.⁷² Bryan had been an aggressive State auditor and an opponent of excessive banking privileges, but the story which was circulated that he had once edited a Federalist paper in Buffalo, New York, lost him much support in the Ohio State Convention. Van Buren himself knew of Bryan's earlier career in western New York and wrote that he had not always entertained a favorable impression of him as a politician but that the persevering opposition of the Whigs to him (Bryan) had caused him (Van Buren) to feel that his apprehensions were unfounded. Bryan in reply admitted that he had once been embroiled in the "confused" politics of New York state but insisted that, since coming to Ohio, he had been steadfast in his devotion to the Democratic Party. He submitted an editorial written by an old neighbor in New York state, who had become editor of the Manhattan (Ohio) *Advertiser* to show that he had been a friend of Van Buren since 1819.⁷³

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, Aug. 17, 1838; Cincinnati *Gazette*, Aug. 27, 1838.

⁷¹ *Ohio Statesman*, June 22, Nov. 23, 1838; Cincinnati *Gazette*, July 4, 1838.

⁷² Newark (Ohio) *Constitutionalist*, in *Ohio Statesman*, Dec. 1, 1837.

⁷³ John A. Bryan to Van Buren, Columbus, Feb. 19, 1838, Van Buren MSS.; *Ohio Statesman*, Feb. 14, 1838.

The Ohio Democratic Convention, however, nominated Wilson Shannon of Belmont County for governor. Shannon had been born in that county in February, 1802, the youngest of nine children. His father who had come from Virginia in 1800 was frozen to death when Wilson was only a year old. Wilson's brother James helped finance his schooling at Ohio University (Athens) for a year and at Transylvania University for two years. Wilson Shannon had then become a lawyer at St. Clairsville, and although defeated for Congress in 1832 had served two terms as prosecuting attorney of Belmont County.⁷⁴ Shannon was widely heralded as the first Ohio-born candidate for the governorship, and he carried on an aggressive campaign, stressing "Jeffersonian democratic principles," prudently administered internal improvements, and a reform of the bank system. He made many speeches throughout the State, one of them at Ravenna, on July 7. One unfriendly paper said that he was "traversing the state, like a peddler of wares, making his 'bank speech,' wherever a knot of locofocos" could be brought together.⁷⁵ At Ravenna he advocated: clauses in all bank charters making the private property of the stockholders liable for their portion of the corporate debts; a much ampler specie basis for note issues; the altering or amending of bank charters whenever the public good required; the restraining of directors and stockholders from borrowing from their own banks; and the suppression of bank notes of under five dollars and perhaps, eventually of larger amounts.⁷⁶

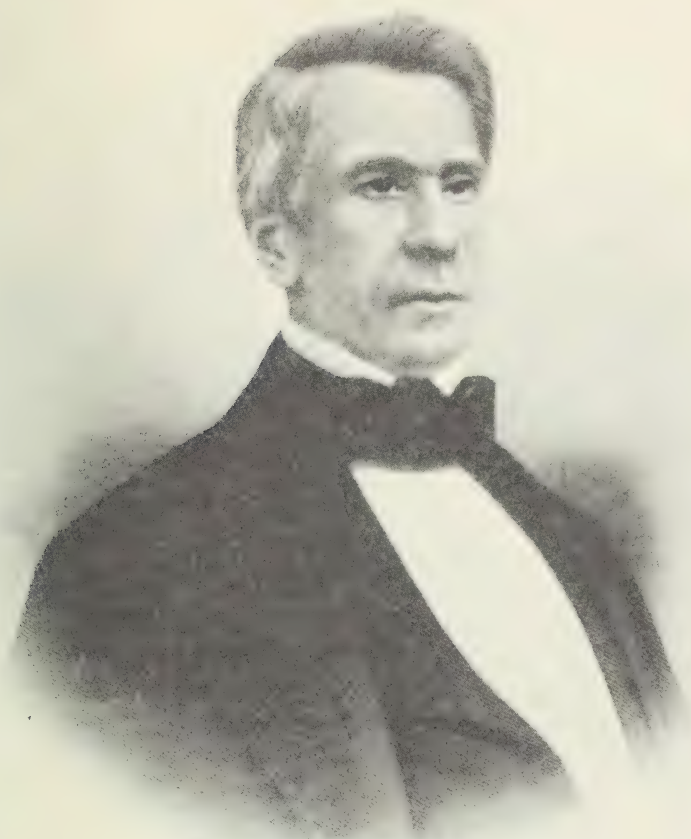
Vance himself had written privately that the "ultraism" of some of the Whigs in favor of "high-toned doctrines and vested rights" in the legislative session of 1837-38 had been even too much for some of the Whigs and had led to a reaction in the opposite direction in Democratic circles.⁷⁷ The oratorical appeals of Senator Allen were heard in at least twenty counties as his voice was added

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, Jan. 23, 1838.

⁷⁵ *Belmont Chronicle*, Aug. 28, 1838.

⁷⁶ *Ohio Statesman*, July 20, 1838.

⁷⁷ Joseph Vance to John Sloane, Columbus, Mar. 4, 1838, Rice MSS.



30. WILSON SHANNON (1802-1877)

First Ohio-born governor of the State, a leading Democrat, and minister to Mexico. Courtesy of Ohio State Museum.

to that of Shannon in the loud clamor for "bank reform." In addition, charges were brought against the private morality of the governor, and the antislavery people were much irritated by his action in the so-called *Mahan* case which occurred during 1838.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ *Ohio State Journal*, Oct. 24, 1838.

John B. Mahan, a clergyman of Brown County had been accused of assisting fifteen slaves, two of them belonging to a William Greathouse, on their way to Canada from Kentucky. Under the Federal Fugitive Slave Law, Governor James Clark of Kentucky issued a requisition on Vance for the surrender of Mahan for trial in Kentucky. The request was honored, but Vance soon regretted his ready compliance, for it became evident that Mahan had not been in Kentucky for many years, hence he could not be amenable to the penalty of her laws. The judge ruled that the prisoner could not have violated the criminal law of Kentucky unless he had personally been near enough to aid in case of alarm; the jury rendered a verdict of not guilty; and Mahan was returned to his Ohio home. The whole affair reacted against the popularity of Vance.⁷⁹

In other respects the Whig Party was embarrassed by the slavery question. On the Western Reserve, candidates were queried by abolitionists as to their attitude on Texas and the slave trade in the District of Columbia. Some antislavery Whigs, moreover, would have welcomed the reelection of the violently antislavery Democratic senator, Thomas Morris.⁸⁰ Many believed that the irrepressible Presidential ambitions of Henry Clay had been a dead weight upon the party in Ohio.⁸¹ At any rate, after the fall elections, the Whig *Ohio State Journal* could only lament "Routed! Horse and Foot! We, the Whigs of Ohio are beaten, and that most essentially. We have no mitigating circumstances—no saving clauses—no consolation." Shannon had won over Vance by 5,738 votes; the Democrats controlled both houses of the new legislature and thus would elect a Democratic senator; and the Whig majority in Ohio's congressional delegation was changed to a Democratic one of four members.⁸² The first Ohio-born governor of the State prepared to enter upon the duties of his office. Oddly

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, Oct. 31, Nov. 28, Dec. 7, 1838; *Ohio Statesman*, Oct. 30, 1838.

⁸⁰ *Philanthropist* (Cincinnati), Oct. 23, 1838.

⁸¹ *Belmont Chronicle*, Oct. 30, 1838; *Ohio State Journal*, Oct. 24, 1838.

⁸² *Ibid.*, Oct. 17, 1838; *Ohio Statesman*, Oct. 30, 1838.

enough, Robert Lucas the only previous Democratic governor of the State had entered in this same year into the office of a governorship, this time as territorial governor of Iowa with whose development he was to be associated during the remainder of his life.

The new legislature was organized with James J. Faran, prominent Cincinnati as speaker of the House and William Hawkins of Morgan County as speaker of the Senate. The choice of Hawkins, a mechanic, was acclaimed in Democratic circles as proof that "that class of citizens may as successfully aspire to public favors as any others, when by industry and study they acquire the necessary qualifications."⁸³ Shannon was inaugurated on December 13, and in spite of a recent severe illness, delivered his address in "a clear and distinct voice." The new governor denied that the Ohio Democrats desired the destruction of all paper money and the establishment of an exclusive gold and silver standard. He called the attention of the legislature to the need of increasing the liability of bank stockholders so as to protect the public. Likewise he urged the limiting of paper currency by provision for adequate specie reserves, by compulsory payment of notes in specie under penalty of forfeiture of the charter, and by the prohibition of the issuing of notes of less than five dollars. He also advocated an express provision in all bank charters, reserving to the legislature the power of altering, amending, or repealing bank charters at will so that the banks would consult the interests of the people.⁸⁴

After much acrimonious discussion, a law was enacted March 18, 1839, which prohibited Ohio corporations other than banks from engaging in unauthorized banking by the issuing of circulating notes.⁸⁵ To restrict the issuing of notes by Ohio banks the legislature passed the Bank Commissioner Act of February 25, 1839, providing that the bills in circulation of any Ohio bank should not exceed three times the amount of specie in the vaults of the bank, actually belonging to it and not including deposits.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, Dec. 10, 1838.

⁸⁴ *Ohio State Journal*, Dec. 18, 1838; *Ohio Statesman*, Dec. 14, 1838.

⁸⁵ *Ohio Laws, Statutes, etc., Statutes of the State of Ohio* (ed. by J. R. Swan, Columbus, 1841), 140-1.

The directors were individually liable for any excess, and after them the stockholders, in proportion to the amount of their stock. Each bank had to pay its notes on demand in gold, silver, or the current notes of other banks, and if unable to do so for thirty days in one year, it was to be closed. Three bank commissioners were to be selected by the legislature to visit the banks, examine their books, and make regular reports, with ample power to carry out the provisions of the act.⁸⁶

The fluctuation in the State policy toward its banks—due to the change in party control in the legislature—and the general financial uncertainty of the country, produced a certain economic instability with attendant injury to business. The withdrawal from circulation of the small notes necessitated an adjustment in the summer of 1839. In the spring, business had been good though not rushing, and important construction projects were in progress both in Cincinnati and Columbus.⁸⁷ As the summer approached, however, a decline in prices was noted, and in July the canal tolls of the State showed a decrease of twenty-six per cent. from those of the previous year. On the other hand, in August the revenue from canal tolls was greater than in the year previous. The renewed suspension of specie payments by the Philadelphia banks in October, 1839, prompted similar institutions in the South and West to follow the same course, but the Ohio banks were handicapped by the law of February, 1839, which provided for the closing of any bank which suspended specie payments for over thirty days. Brokers in the State consequently offered a high premium for specie, and although some Ohio banks suspended temporarily, resumption was always begun before the thirty-day period had elapsed.⁸⁸

In the October elections of 1839, the Ohio Democrats won a signal victory, obtaining a two-thirds or greater majority in both

⁸⁶ Huntington, "History of Banking," 164.

⁸⁷ Cincinnati Gazette, Aug. 31, 1839; Ohio State Journal, July 16, Sept. 10, 1839; Ohio Statesman, Apr. 16, 19, May 21, 1839.

⁸⁸ Cincinnati Gazette, Oct. 15, Nov. 5, 7, 1839; Ohio Statesman, Oct. 18, 22, 25, Nov. 5, 8, 1839.

houses (Senate, 25:11; House 48:24). Even the rock-ribbed Whig counties of the Western Reserve returned six Democratic members. The Democratic press heralded the result as indicative of the popularity of "bank reform," while the Whigs claimed that their party had suffered from factionalism over local questions in relation to county-seats and county boundaries, from political and sectional bickerings on the abolitionist question, and from a failure to rally to the support of William Henry Harrison.⁸⁹

In December, 1839, the bank commissioners of Ohio made their first annual report, which showed that mutual hostility among Ohio banks had contributed to the draining of specie from them and to public distrust. It deprecated the policy of certain Ohio banks in issuing post-notes, bearing no interest and payable at some future time (perhaps a year later), yet employed by the bank to make loans to borrowers or to pay off depositors at par. Among other practises condemned in the report were the evils attending the circulation of out-of-State notes and the large loans made to their directors and stockholders on liberal terms by bank officers. A direct and unqualified liability of every stockholder for bank notes issued was advocated.⁹⁰

During the same month, Shannon in his annual message to the legislature considered the possibility of a State bank and that of a "free" or general banking system, but urged the continuance of the existing arrangement of independently chartered banks. These, if properly restricted, under the supervision of commissioners and controlled by the legislature, he believed, would offer the best practical solution for the problem of bank reform.⁹¹ This point of view was approved by some of the leading Whig papers. The *Springfield Republican* deemed his views on the currency "an odd mixture of sense and nonsense—wisdom and folly—fairnesses and sophisms," for while Shannon considered a return to a hard money currency impractical, he urged the exclusion of notes

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, Oct. 15, 22, 1839; *Ohio State Journal*, Oct. 18, 22, 1839.

⁹⁰ *Ohio Executive Documents*, 1839, no. 22, p. 9ff.

⁹¹ Huntington, "History of Banking," 167.

of less than five dollars. The same paper thought that on the banking question Shannon occupied "pretty good Whig ground."⁹² On the other hand the *Locofoco Cincinnati Advertiser* criticized Shannon for his "temporizing" policy and called a public meeting for December 12, for it was "high time the Democratic citizens of this state understood each other" upon the banking question. The *Cincinnati Phoenix* was disappointed with the governor's message.⁹³ The Cincinnati meeting of December 12, addressed by Morris (who had been succeeded in the U. S. Senate by Benjamin Tappan of Steubenville), adopted resolutions denouncing Shannon's views on the currency, denying the constitutionality of any coins except gold and silver, declaring the chartering of any banks in Ohio uncalled for and inexpedient, and insisting that Shannon could not again be supported for the governorship.⁹⁴ Samuel Spangler and John Brough (who had been chosen State auditor by the legislature early in 1839) were mentioned as possible nominees in his stead, for Democratic leaders in the State, such as Dawson, Morris and Brough, held banking views different from those of Shannon. Brough was found to be ineligible for the governorship, as he was only twenty-eight, and thirty was the minimum age under the constitution. Perhaps a man of the type of Brough (who was denounced by the Whig *Ohio State Journal* as "an ultra Bentonian—one of your hard headed, dead-set hard currency men") was too extreme for the party. Hints were made that the national Democratic Administration approved of Shannon's course. At any rate, the party organ at Columbus, edited by Samuel Medary, strongly defended the governor, and numerous county meetings expressed similar sentiments. At the State Democratic Convention, which met on January 8, Thomas Hamer, a bitter enemy of Morris was chosen to preside, and party discipline secured the renomination of Shannon by acclamation.⁹⁵

⁹² Quoted in *Ohio State Journal*, Dec. 10, 1839.

⁹³ *Cincinnati Advertiser*, Dec. 18, 1839; *Cincinnati Gazette*, Dec. 6, 11, 1839.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, Dec. 17, 1839; *Ohio Statesman*, Dec. 17, 1839.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, Dec. 25, 28, 1839; Jan. 7, 8, 1840; *Cincinnati Gazette*, Dec. 24, 31, 1839; Jan. 7, 1840.

The legislature on March 23, 1840, passed a new law forbidding banks or other corporations in Ohio from receiving or paying out bank notes under five dollars and all post-notes of certain types, under penalty of \$100 for each offense and the forfeiture of the charter of the offending bank. County treasurers, moreover, were forbidden to receive the small bank notes for taxes.⁹⁶ This created a real problem for small taxpayers who found it difficult to secure specie with which to pay their taxes. It also caused small Ohio notes to be supplanted in large degree by those of other states such as those issued by the St. Joseph Railroad Company in Michigan.⁹⁷

During 1839 and 1840 times were hard in Ohio. Money was scarce, but the crops of 1839 had been abundant, and thus conditions were alleviated by cheap foodstuffs. On the other hand, Ohio's finances were in a wretched condition. Under the law of 1837, which had authorized loans and subscriptions of stock by the State to aid internal improvement projects, much of the State's credit had been tapped during the next three years. The law had come to be known as the "Plunder Law" (as well as the "Loan Law" and "the General Improvement Law"). By 1839 the auditor estimated that the annual interest charge upon the State debt was \$660,000, making for a deficit of over a quarter of a million dollars for the payment of interest which had to be obtained by further borrowing.⁹⁸ Hence, the act was repealed in February, 1840, only six votes being cast in the lower house against repeal. Interest charges continued, however, and certain projects already begun had to be completed. Shannon himself went to New York in the spring and obtained a loan for the State of \$400,000, but by November the State was so hard pressed for funds that the auditor was unsuccessfully importuned to advance \$200,000 from the general revenue fund to meet interest charges.⁹⁹

⁹⁶ Ohio Laws, *Statutes* (Swan, 1841), 141ff.

⁹⁷ Cincinnati *Gazette*, Aug. 5, 1840; *Ohio Statesman*, Sept. 4, 1840.

⁹⁸ Bogart, *Internal Improvements*, 169-70.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 170; *Ohio Statesman*, May 22, 1840.

In the meantime, many had looked to the subtreasury plan of the Federal Government as a partial solution for existing financial difficulties. After Van Buren had suggested the scheme to Congress in September, 1837, Allen had spent considerable time in pondering over it, and in February, 1838, had made his first formal speech in the Senate, in support of the creation of an independent treasury. For this oratorical effort Allen received many letters of commendation including one from Jefferson Davis. The Ohio legislature, however, was at that time controlled by the Whigs and sent resolutions to both Ohio senators asking them to vote against the subtreasury. Allen and Morris refused to be bound by such resolutions, and a Whig State Convention solemnly called upon them to resign their seats. The result was that the subtreasury issue was injected into the State campaign of 1838.¹⁰⁰ When the subtreasury bill finally became law in July, 1840, the Whig *Ohio State Journal* announced the passage "in sorrow and deep abasement" while the Democratic *Ohio Statesman* hailed it as "a great triumph of the People over Bank corporations—speculators, and the rag barons both in Europe and America."¹⁰¹

In his message to the legislature in December, Shannon again asserted his ideas of bank reform but in more aggressive tones. He stated that the choice was "between reformation and destruction." He warned that if bank reform proved unsuccessful, the remedy would be found "in the substitution of banks of discounts and deposits for those of circulation." He opposed a State bank but urged full liability for the stockholders as a means of avoiding the excesses of private banking. The Whigs, however, had won the elections of 1840 in Ohio, and the State looked to them during the immediate future for proposals relating to financial policy.

During Van Buren's administration a matter of much interest to Ohioans had been the Canadian Rebellion of 1837-38. Late in 1837 an armed uprising had broken out both in Upper and Lower Canada (Ontario and Quebec respectively). In each re-

¹⁰⁰ McGrane, *William Allen*, 57-80.

¹⁰¹ Issues of July 7, 1840.

gion one of the causes of dissatisfaction was the privileged political position of a minority group, in Upper Canada the so-called Family Compact, and in Lower Canada, the "Chateau Clique." Numerous Ohioans, like their fellow countrymen elsewhere, believed that the issues were similar to those for which their forefathers had fought during the American Revolution, and the memory of the War of 1812 prompted many to wish the overthrow of British power. The situation had been aggravated by the capture and burning of an American vessel, the *Caroline*, with the loss of an American life, late in December, 1837. Most Ohioans did not wish war, but the attitude of many was expressed in a memorial from citizens of Belmont County, presented by Allen in the United States Senate. It asked that no atonement be accepted from Great Britain short of a surrender to American tribunals of the guilty persons involved in the *Caroline* episode.¹⁰² Various groups of Americans sympathetic with the patriots began, however, to organize for attacks on Canada. Some of the volunteers moved through northern Ohio for an invasion by way of Detroit. Ebenezer Lane of Norwalk, a native of Massachusetts who had graduated from Harvard, and was at the time judge of the Ohio Supreme Court, wrote rather sarcastically of the movements:

"We have been holding meetings for sympathizing with the suffering Patriots, in this town. *We* have appointed a Committee to defend our own soil from Invasion and to 'encourage emigration' to such benighted parts of the world as need the promulgation of *our* principles. A Band of about 30 worthies, ragged, lousy, and patriotic, passed this town for the west on Saturday, to conquer Malden. Report says they hold an Island on the British side of Detroit River. That a Schooner which had been carrying supplies to them, on its return, under the influence of the purest benevolence fired a gun into a crowd of the runaway negroes, who were gazing stupidly upon the shore, from the Canada Shore. But their vessel was not beyond the range of the guns in the Fort, which opened a fire upon it, dismantled it so that the crew were

¹⁰² *Ohio Statesman*, Feb. 3, 1838.

captured, and are now suffering for this ebullition [*sic*] of democracy and good feeling by confinement in Jail. Poor fellows; where are all our Major Generals and their troops, the Bulwark of our Liberties?"¹⁰³

Another attempt was made late in February under the leadership of two "patriot" commanders, Thomas Jefferson Sutherland and Alexander McLeod. The latter had made a number of speeches in favor of the cause in northern Ohio, one in the Painesville town hall. On February 24, the expedition ventured across the ice to an island a few miles below Detroit, but the next day the members of the party were driven back by British cannon. Still another endeavor was made, with temporary success, at Pointe-au-Pelee Island, but upon retiring to the mainland of Ohio, the troops were met by General Hugh Brady at the head of some Ohio militiamen who confiscated their arms and sent them home.¹⁰⁴ By this time the patriot bands along the Niagara River had been fairly well driven to cover, and General Winfield Scott had been assisting in the efforts to preserve American neutrality in the vicinity of Detroit. Returning eastward he had reached Sandusky on March 6, at a time when McLeod, the patriot adjutant-general, was at Drake's Hotel in that city. McLeod fled, being secreted by a citizen until the next morning when he started in the direction of Huron, Ohio. The patriots, however, could not avoid capture for any length of time since the border was now well patrolled, and Scott returned to Albany and New York City.¹⁰⁵ The patriots realized that publicized operations against the Canadian frontier could not succeed and began to organize secret, oath-bound societies, which came to be merged into "Hunters' Lodges." Such organizations were composed of all classes of people. Samuel A. Lane, a newspaper publisher of Akron, found when he was initiated that the society included "the most no-

¹⁰³ Ebenezer Lane to Peter Hitchcock, Norwalk, Huron Co., Jan. 22, 1838, Rice MSS.

¹⁰⁴ Samuel Unger, "Hunters' Lodges and the Canadian Rebellion," M. A. thesis, Ohio State University, 1931, 6-8.

¹⁰⁵ *Ohio Statesman*, Mar. 9, 1838.

torious counterfeiter of his time, and several well-known gamblers, together with village councilmen, justices of the peace, lawyers, doctors, etc." Adventurers and the unemployed were usually more eager than substantial citizens to take up arms. Cleveland became the western center for the lodges and was the scene of a convention of the organization, September 16–22, 1838, attended by seventy delegates from Ohio and Michigan. A republican government for Upper Canada was organized with a full list of officers, A. D. Smith, a Cleveland justice of the peace being president of the republic; and Colonel Williams of the same city, a wholesale grocer, vice-president; and Lucius V. Bierce, an Akron attorney, commander-in-chief of "the Army of the Northwest."¹⁰⁶ Late in the year expeditions were planned against Canada via Lake Ontario and Detroit. To the latter venture, Sandusky and Cleveland contributed numerous recruits, three hundred men sailing from Cleveland on November 22, for Detroit. Under the command of Bierce, the patriots actually captured and burned the barracks at Windsor, but eventually were forced to flee in canoes to the American shore. Some, however, were killed or captured. There was much sympathy in Ohio for the plight of the patriots. Not only from northern Ohio but from Licking County men and arms had been dispatched for the cause. A great meeting in Musical Hall in Cleveland, December 1, was addressed by one, Teller, said to be the first prisoner ever to have escaped from the fortress of Quebec, and others. Teller closed his speech with the cry, "Canada would be free," a sentiment which elicited a shout "Canada shall be free." The Democratic *Ohio Statesman* at Columbus had been especially ardent in support of Canadian liberties, though Hammond of the *Cincinnati Gazette* denied that a resort to arms was warranted. He regarded the revolutionary leaders, especially Papineau, as "low and vulgar, characterized by none of that dignity of thought, that elevation of conduct that marked the patriots who took the lead in the American revolution."¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ Unger, "Hunters' Lodges," 18–9.

¹⁰⁷ *Cincinnati Gazette*, Dec. 20, 1837; Feb. 20, 1838.

Van Buren, however, fully realized the obligations of the Government in maintaining American neutrality, and Scott, who during previous months had been engaged in moving the Cherokee Indians west of the Mississippi, now returned to the Ohio frontier. He reached Columbus on December 1, and by the fifth he was in Cleveland. Finding much excitement there, he made public addresses to crowds in that city and in Sandusky and Detroit in an endeavor to quiet the clamor.¹⁰⁸ Gradually it became apparent that the patriot cause was hopeless from the military standpoint, and the *Ohio Statesman* expressed more restrained views:

"We hope everyone concerned in the Canada difficulty will not forget that if Canada is made free, it must be done on the other side of the line. There has been rashness enough. It cannot longer deserve our sympathies, if not better planned and executed." In the same month Justice John McLean of the United States Supreme Court, in a charge to the grand jury at the circuit court in Columbus, called attention to the citizens who had been engaged in the "lawless enterprise" of bearing arms against a friendly power and urged that "these violators of the law should not escape with impunity."¹⁰⁹ As the power of both the executive and judicial branches of the Government was exerted to restrain unneutral demonstrations, Ohioans acquiesced in the required obedience to Federal law, but continued to express vociferous anti-British sentiment. Allen presented a memorial from citizens of Geauga County to the United States Senate, February 20, 1839, complaining of the severe provisions of the neutrality law and desiring its repeal or essential modification.

The Maine boundary controversy with Great Britain, in Hammond's opinion, was too unimportant for bellicose demonstrations since it involved only "a few acres of pine hills, good for nothing but the timber that grows on them." Yet, the very chauvinism of which he warned was exhibited by those Anglophobes whose views were bellowed forth by the *Ohio Statesman*: "We hear but one

¹⁰⁸ C. W. Elliott, *Winfield Scott* (New York, 1937), 356-7.

¹⁰⁹ *Ohio Statesman*, Dec. 25, 1838.

voice among the people in this quarter from all parties—and that is, Let us have war rather than dishonor. England has humbugged us long enough about our boundary line.”¹¹⁰ Even the Ohio legislature on March 18, 1839, adopted resolutions which approved efforts made by the Federal Government to avert hostilities with Great Britain but stated that “should a collision take place between this government and Great Britain in the settlement of the pending dispute, Ohio tenders her whole means and resources to the authorities of this Union, in sustaining our rights and sacred honor.”¹¹¹

Early in 1840, the *Ohio Statesman* was again venting its anti-British feelings: “Great Britain is making herself ready at every point, to appeal to arms as the arbiter of the question in relation to the North Eastern Boundary. The peaceful state of Europe leaves that power somewhat at leisure. She has nothing for her large standing army to do. She has no employment for a horde of men who are ashamed to beg and too proud to dig—men who seem to have been born an incumbrance on the world. It would be sound policy to have them killed off; and if Queen Victoria sends them over the water, she knows well enough what aim we take to be sure of never more being troubled with them.”¹¹²

At the same time, many Ohioans were irritated that the Canadian rebel leader, William Lyon Mackenzie, was being confined in an American jail. A citizen of Canton wrote directly to Van Buren to learn why he had not been released, and the Democratic State Central Committee informed the President that most Ohioans desired the immediate release of Mackenzie and that failure to accomplish it would have a bad political effect on the Democrats of Ohio. Apparently German, Irish, and French settlers in the State, particularly, viewed his continued confinement as an act of tyranny.¹¹³

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, March 8, 1839.

¹¹¹ Ohio, *House Journal*, 37 Assem., 765, 778, 802.

¹¹² *Ohio Statesman*, Jan. 29, 1840.

¹¹³ Samuel C. Frey to Van Buren, Canton, O., Jan. 10, 1840, Van Buren MSS.; Democratic State Central Committee to *id.*, Feb. 13, 1840, *ibid.*

Fortunately it was possible to release the patriot leader, and he remained in the United States as a free man for several years before amnesty from Canadian authorities permitted his return to that country. The Maine boundary dispute, like most other difficulties with Great Britain, was settled by the Webster-Ashburton Treaty of 1842, and doubtless most Ohioans were sincerely glad that "the whole means and resources" of the State had not been called upon to sustain the "sacred honor" of the Nation, and that peace continued with their northern neighbor.

The Developing Antislavery Movement

DURING the first two decades of Ohio's history as a State, the number of Negroes was small, and although the legal position of the blacks was rigidly limited, in the primitive conditions of that time, members of the two races might even be found eating at the same table.¹ Little feeling existed in Ohio favorable to the introduction of slavery, and transplanted southerners saw the ultimate advantages of a free labor economy. Many people in the State were moved to antislavery views by humanitarian sentiments, but on the other hand the feeling was wide-spread that the influx of free Negroes into Ohio would present problems hardly less perplexing than those related to a slave-holding society.²

The agitation in connection with the Missouri question during 1819-20 had aroused considerable consternation in the State, and in the preliminary discussions of Presidential nominees of 1824, the slavery issue threatened to become important. John Quincy Adams was especially satisfactory to antislavery men in Ohio, and the Cincinnati *Gazette* took pains to defend Henry Clay against charges of proslavery proclivities. This issue, however, was soon subordinated to other questions, and for many years, the slavery controversy ceased to be an important political factor in the State.

The detrimental effects of slavery were generally recognized. The Chillicothe (Ohio) *Scioto Gazette* asserted in 1825: "The evils of slavery are acknowledged by all candid men to be very great, and daily increasing in magnitude; and unless means can be

¹ R. G. Thwaites, ed., *Early Western Travels, 1748-1846* (Cleveland, 1904-7), XI, 178.

² C. J. Wilson, "Negro in Early Ohio," *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, XXXIX (1930), 717-68.

devised effectually to check their progress, and in due time to eradicate them, they must, before any very great time, be wholly irremediable.”³ During the next year the *Cincinnati Gazette* declared slavery “an evil in and a disgrace to our country,” and the Presbyterian Synod of Ohio branded it as “manstealing.”⁴ These church leaders were commended by a Columbus newspaper for their stand, but the *National Intelligencer* of Washington criticized them for the “misdirection of their zeal.”⁵

Earlier, two individuals of Quaker background had taken important steps in developing the antislavery movement in Ohio. In 1815, Benjamin Lundy had organized the first society with antislavery principles in Ohio, at St. Clairsville; in 1817, Charles Osborn had begun the publication of the *Philanthropist*, an antislavery paper, at Mt. Pleasant; and various editors had favored gradual emancipation.⁶ Charles Hammond of the *Cincinnati Gazette*, always an opponent of slavery as a “great moral and political evil,” in 1826 abandoned his earlier hope that slaveholders themselves would accomplish the elimination of the existing system of bondage, for he noted their irritated reactions to every hint of emancipation.⁷

In 1827, in the Presbyterian Church, the Presbytery of Chillicothe voted funds for the distribution of an antislavery pamphlet and shortly afterwards unanimously adopted a resolution declaring slavery to be “a heinous sin and scandal.” John Rankin, minister at Ripley from 1821 to 1865, was a leading figure in this strongly antislavery religious organization. His letters in opposition to the “peculiar institution” first appeared in the Ripley (Ohio) *Castigator* in 1824 and were printed in book form in 1826. His home at Ripley on a high bluff overlooking the Ohio River later became a

³ Oct. 13, 1825.

⁴ *Cincinnati Gazette*, Sept. 26, 1826.

⁵ Washington (D.C.) *National Intelligencer*, Nov. 23, 1826; *Cincinnati Gazette*, Dec. 5, 1836.

⁶ R. A. Ketring, *Charles Osborn in the Anti-slavery Movement* (Columbus, 1937), 35-7.

⁷ F. P. Weisenburger, *Life of Charles Hammond* (Columbus, 1934), 80-1.

starting point for various routes of the Underground Railroad. Associated with Rankin in the Chillicothe Presbytery were other stalwart opponents of slavery: James H. Dickey and James Gilliland, who had come from South Carolina; Samuel Crothers from Kentucky, and Dyer Burgess.⁸

Yet, in view of the constitutional status of slavery in the states where it was sanctioned by local law, probably most Ohioans who personally disliked slavery, agreed with Hammond that "the right of property in slaves cannot be questioned or touched by the federal government, or by any state beyond its own territory."⁹ The most immediately practical problem relating to slavery from the standpoint of Ohioans in the decade of the 'twenties, however, was that of the influx of freedmen, who were not welcome to remain in the South.¹⁰ This accounts in large part for the keen interest expressed by many Ohioans in the work of the American Colonization Society. One newspaper urging support for the organization, commented:

"[Ohio's] bosom has long been made a receptacle for those blacks who have been set free in other states. . . . Idleness, sooner or later, begets a tendency to vice, and sets an evil example to the rising youth of the white population. . . . Their [the Negroes'] numbers are increasing rapidly in our state; but they add little or nothing to its resources, while they occupy the room which might be filled with a white population, more industrious, and intelligent. Colonization in Africa offers to the black population advantages which they can never hope to enjoy in this state."¹¹ Governor Allen Trimble, in his annual message of 1827, stated that "it would be difficult to determine whether the appeal which has been made by the society addresses itself more powerfully to the slave, or non-slave holding states; to the benevolence, the interest or to the fears of the people."¹²

⁸ D. L. Dumond, *Antislavery Origins of the Civil War* (Ann Arbor, 1939), 7.

⁹ *Cincinnati Gazette*, April 11, 1826.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Sept. 12, 26, Nov. 3, 1826; *Columbus Ohio State Journal*, Mar. 22, 1827.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, May 24, 1827.

¹² *Ibid.*, Dec. 6, 1827.

At any rate, branches of the society had been formed at Warren, Cleveland, and Ravenna on the Western Reserve in the fall of 1826; newspapers endorsed the movement; and in 1827 a group of college students at Miami University banded themselves into an auxiliary.¹³ A State organization was perfected, of which annual meetings were held. In 1834, Governor Robert Lucas was chosen president of the State society, and among the ten vice-presidents were such public leaders as James Hoge, Calvin Pease, Joseph Vance, Jacob Burnet, John Bigger, John C. Wright, and William McLean.¹⁴ In Cincinnati a woman's and even a children's auxiliary were formed; in various cities, churches took up collections for the cause; and one popular actress announced a benefit performance to assist the enterprise. As late as November, 1834, at the annual meeting of the Cincinnati society, confidence was expressed in the colonization program, as Joseph Jones, a colored man from Liberia was examined as to the prospects of the colony, and coffee, palm fruit, and primitive manufactures of the Africans were exhibited.¹⁵

The rapid increase in the number of Negroes in the State, partly due to their fecundity, and the lack of any wide-spread enthusiasm for the colonization project, caused realistically-minded persons to express rather early their serious doubts as to its practicability. The board of managers of the State society in December, 1829, regretted their inability to present a more favorable report because of the general inattention of all classes of the community to the nature and objects of the society.¹⁶ In 1830, the Cincinnati *Chronicle* asserted that the success of the grand designs of the founders of the organization would be at least "problematical," though the effort was entitled to a fair experiment.¹⁷

It soon became evident, moreover, that the leaders of the col-

¹³ Ravenna (Ohio) *Western Courier*, Nov. 4, 1826; *Ohio State Journal*, May 31, 1827.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Dec. 27, 1834.

¹⁵ Cincinnati *Gazette*, July 4, 1828, Apr. 27, 1833, Nov. 4, 6, Dec. 19, 1834.

¹⁶ *Ohio State Journal*, Jan. 10, 1829.

¹⁷ Aug. 21, 1830.

onization movement were not definitely interested in improving the condition of the Negro as he lived and labored in America. That such was the case was clearly brought out by discussions held by students of Lane Theological Seminary (Presbyterian) in Cincinnati. As late as September, 1832, such an antislavery man as Theodore D. Weld wrote from Cincinnati that he was thoroughly convinced that only colonization offered a solution for the slavery question.¹⁸

Weld was acting as a field agent for the New York merchant and reformer, Arthur Tappan, to find a site for a theological seminary in the West, the school to be operated on the manual training plan. In this work he visited Western Reserve College at Hudson, where he was moved to use his influence in the cause of negro emancipation and where he made a profound impression upon the faculty. On the Western Reserve he was able to make a number of converts to the abolition cause, including Elizur Wright, Jr., a Yale graduate, who was a mathematician at the college, and during the summer of 1833, the first abolition society on the Reserve was organized.¹⁹ Weld's most significant accomplishment during this period, however, was the selection of the location for the theological seminary. Oddly enough, a site was already available, for two merchants named Lane had donated a beautiful tract in the wooded Walnut Hill section of the Cincinnati vicinity. The Ohio legislature had granted a charter to this "Lane Seminary," and local capitalists had contributed a small sum of money. Weld, visiting the place, was charmed by the splendid location. Tappan pledged a handsome endowment; noted scholars were secured for the teaching staff; and the eminent Lyman Beecher of Boston was persuaded to accept the presidency.

Beecher was an antislavery man, but he was not prepared to emulate the evangelistic zeal with which a large portion of the student body came to renounce colonization and espouse the

¹⁸ To James G. Birney, Sept. 27, 1832, in J. G. Birney, *Letters . . . 1831-1857*, ed. by D. L. Dumond (New York, 1938), I, 27.

¹⁹ G. H. Barnes, *Antislavery Impulse, 1830-1844* (New York, 1933), 38-40.

cause of abolition. The new theological seminary had attracted an able and earnest group of young men from various sections of the country. Some of them were from southern homes and knew from first-hand experience every aspect of the slaveholding system. Fired with religious enthusiasm the young men were interested in testing in the Cincinnati community, where over twenty-five hundred Negroes resided, the possibilities of advancement for free persons of the colored race. Sunday schools, a lyceum, day and evening schools were established for the Negro. One student spent a night as a friendly visitor in a colored home, and several negro women came in a carriage to pay the seminary a visit. Exaggerated reports spread through the community as to these idealistic efforts to bridge the social gaps between the races and were of the type to incite mob violence in a border locality.

The zealous student body had organized a lyceum for the discussion of public questions, and in February, 1834, the faculty of the seminary was invited to attend a series of evening meetings dealing with the duty of slaveholders as to the immediate emancipation of their slaves and the claims of the American Colonization Society to public support. The seminary faculty deemed it inadvisable to attend this forum, but there was no interference with the holding of it, and the discussion continued for eighteen evenings. On the ninth evening and at the conclusion of the series, a vote was taken, the first one resulting in an endorsement of "immediate" emancipation, the latter in the repudiation of colonization and the formation of an abolition society.²⁰

These meetings were of tremendous importance in the development of events that were to lead to the Civil War, for they marked a turning point in the transition from mild antislavery proposals to an aggressive abolitionism. They were also significant in establishing a reactionary precedent as to the principle of the free discussion of public questions.

The seminary was situated in a race-conscious border community and drew students and support from the lower Mississippi Val-

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 64-8.

ley as well as from northern states. Hence, news of the activities of the Lane student body was received unsympathetically by some of the patrons of the seminary. In the meantime, Beecher made a visit to the East where he found that news of the discussions had caused great uneasiness. A group of college officials in the East unanimously agreed upon the suppression of all antislavery agitation and sent copies of their action to every American college. Hearing of this, the Executive Committee of the Lane Board of Trustees ruled that public meetings for discussion purposes ought not to be held by the students without official approval and that antislavery societies in the college must be abolished. For violations of the rules, and even dinner table conversations on the slavery question were proscribed, a committee of trustees (later of faculty members) was vested with power of dismissal. Practically all of the student body then asked for honorable dismissal. This was granted but with no intention of helping the withdrawing "rebels" to carry out their own plans.

Thus, fifty-three students parted company with Lane Seminary, but a large part of them remained in Cincinnati to continue welfare work among the Negroes of the city. At length a large rambling building was placed at their disposal, and they planned to develop a new seminary where abolitionism would be endorsed. After a number of months, however, they received an invitation from Rev. John J. Shipherd, head of the newly organized Oberlin College, to affiliate with that institution which as yet had received no students. They agreed to enroll in the spring of 1835 if Negroes would be admitted to the college, if Asa Mahan (the only friendly Lane trustee during the crisis of the previous year) would be made president, and if Weld and John Morgan (formerly of the Lane faculty) would be given professorships. Shipherd had considerable difficulty in persuading the Oberlin Board of Trustees to accept these conditions, but they finally did so as a result of the influence and casting vote of Rev. John Keep, president of the board. Weld refused a professorship for himself but helped to obtain in his stead the famous theologian-evangelist, Charles G. Finney.

In the meantime, the ardent Weld had definitely converted Birney from the support of colonization to an uncompromising abolition position and was making headway with the development of a vibrant antislavery crusade among religious groups. During the fall of 1834 and throughout the year 1835 he carried on a vigorous campaign in Ohio, especially in Presbyterian churches. Sometimes he obtained a hearing because of his renown as a temperance orator. Weld's evangelistic zeal won many preachers for the crusade and awakened the enthusiastic support of lawyers like Edwin M. Stanton of Steubenville and Joshua R. Giddings of Jefferson who became national leaders in the antislavery cause.²¹

Inevitably, the attacks upon property rights and political stability, implicit in the abolitionist doctrine, aroused consternation among conservative Ohioans. The suppression of academic freedom at Lane Seminary was followed by frequent and sometimes violent attacks upon the principle of freedom of discussion in non-collegiate centers. Sometimes mobs, not at all interested in the protection of property rights, were stimulated to action by a hostility to the abolitionist's abandonment of the conventional ideas of negro social and intellectual inferiority. When Weld attempted to speak at Circleville, the churches were closed to him, and when a place was finally obtained, a large stone was hurled through the window stunning the speaker momentarily. Weld journeyed to Zanesville, a community then known for its antiabolitionist sentiments early in 1835 to make preparations for the organization of a State abolition society. No place was available in the city for the meetings, and when he spoke at Putnam across the river, mob violence resulted. Weld persisted, however, and ultimately the meeting was invited to return to Zanesville, where hundreds pledged support to the cause.²² This organization meeting of the Ohio Antislavery Society in April, 1835, was attended by one hundred and ten delegates from twenty-five counties. Among those present were confirmed antislavery men such as Rev. John Rankin, of Ripley,

²¹ *Ibid.*, 62-82.

²² *Ibid.*, 83.

Weld, Birney, Crothers, Lane "rebels" from Oberlin and Cincinnati, and numerous Quakers, as well as newer converts. The convention pledged itself to the views endorsed by the American Antislavery Society, organized in New York in 1833—the emancipation of the slaves (though not by merely "turning them loose") and their protection by suitable laws.²³

In Weld's campaign of 1834–5 in Ohio, he had begun his work in Rankin's home town, Ripley, on the Ohio River. Then he had gone to communities such as Zanesville on the old National Road, returning to Ohio River towns for the summer. In the fall he had continued his activities on the Western Reserve. Thus, he visited less than forty villages and towns, but the seeds were planted in those communities for the spread of abolitionism through the State. Within a year, Ohio reported more than a third of all the local antislavery societies in the country. One, the Paint Valley society, with a membership residing in several counties, was the largest in America.²⁴ Centering in Portage County, in 1836 it numbered 942 members.

Weld's activities led not only to mob outbreaks but also to the formation of antiabolitionist societies. Many of these, such as that organized at Granville, Licking County, in the fall of 1835, were composed, not of southern sympathizers but of Whigs of New England background, who were concerned about the preservation of the Union.²⁵ Similarly, a meeting held at Cleveland, September 10, 1835, adopted resolutions declaring the abolitionists to be "unwise, dangerous, and deserving the emphatic reprehension and zealous opposition of every friend of peace and of the country" and disclaiming "all right to interfere directly or indirectly with the subject of Slavery in the Southern States." Other meetings of the same type were held at Painesville, Columbus, and Zanesville. The Painesville group stated that the course of the abolitionist was

²³ P. R. Grim, "Rev. John Rankin, Early Abolitionist," *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, XLVI, 215ff.

²⁴ Barnes, *Antislavery Impulse*, 83, 238.

²⁵ Robert Price, "Further Notes on Granville's Anti-abolition Disturbances," *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, XLV, 365ff.

"alarming in its consequences, as tending directly to a civil war and a dissolution of this Union, by breaking up the original compact," and branded men of the Weld type as "traveling disseminators of treason and discord."²⁶

During six months of 1836, Rankin became a traveling lecturer for the American Society, making numerous addresses at churches in Ohio and occasionally encountering physical violence.²⁷ In the meantime, the first anniversary of the establishment of the Ohio Anti-slavery Society was celebrated by a convention on Ashley A. Bancroft's farm north of Granville, Licking County, April 27-28, 1836. The *Newark Gazette* of March 31 had carried a notice signed by Granville officials and sixty-nine other citizens forbidding the use of any building in the community for the abolitionist gathering. During the previous year the abolition question had prompted violent opposition to meetings in Circleville, Granville, Zanesville (and Putnam), Painesville, Marietta, Willoughby, St. Albans, Brimfield, New Lisbon, Mt. Vernon, Middlebury, Grafton, and Mt. Pleasant. Now, the ordinarily peaceful village of Granville was the scene of another fracas. The convention was held without interference outside the town in Bancroft's barn which was dubbed "Hall of Freedom," but afterwards a procession in which the antislavery people participated was attacked by unfriendly persons, resulting in the throwing of eggs, "personal encounters and more or less personal injury."²⁸ The convention had been attended by one hundred and ninety-two delegates from thirty-two counties and one delegate from Indiana. During the year the number of societies had grown from 20 to 120, with an estimated membership of 10,000.²⁹

The question of freedom of speech and discussion was raised when village officials excluded the antislavery convention from the confines of Granville, and again a few weeks later when an aboli-

²⁶ *Ohio State Journal*, Oct. 9, Dec. 4, 1835.

²⁷ Grim, "Rev. John Rankin," 231.

²⁸ Henry Bushnell, *History of Granville* (Columbus, 1889), 297ff.

²⁹ Robert Price, "Ohio Anti-slavery Convention of 1836," *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, XLV, 173ff.

tionist delivered a discourse in the Federal court-house in Columbus and was refused permission to use the building for a second appearance. Lucas expressed the conservative point of view with which a large portion of the State undoubtedly agreed, when he said:

"We have not one word to say in favor of the principle of slavery. We view it, abstractedly, as both a moral and political evil. But it was interwoven in our political system at its first organization, and its existence has been continued in many of the States as a part of their local policy. With this policy we have no right to interfere."³⁰ Some who held no brief for the point of view of the abolitionists were willing that they should be heard. During 1835-1836, Cincinnati had been disturbed by the arrival in that city of James G. Birney, who planned to establish an antislavery newspaper. "The Queen City," closely bound by commercial and social ties with slaveholding communities, was sensitive to the point of view of its customers, and many citizens demanded a suppression of abolitionist discussion. Such newspapers as the *Post*, the *Whig*, and the *Republican* in that city denounced Birney, but Charles Hammond of the *Gazette* supported the principle of a free press. Public opinion, however, induced Birney to initiate the publication of his paper, the *Philanthropist*, at the village of New Richmond, farther up the Ohio River.³¹

In the meantime, the efforts of an antislavery society in Cincinnati had prompted the Cincinnati *Republican* to appeal to the substantial citizens of the city to assist in suppressing the organization. Hammond, although he believed that the course of abolitionists was "violative of the domestic rights of the owners of slaves" defended their right to be heard. But public excitement was so great that he declared that an "editor is placed between Scylla and Charybdis. A portion of our citizens ask to be heard, upon a question that it is believed they ought not to discuss. Another portion denounce the discussion, as of incendiary and mur-

³⁰ *Ohio People's Press*, May 25, 1836.

³¹ Weisenburger, *Life of Charles Hammond*, 81.

derous character, and insist upon coercing silence."³² On January 22, an antiabolition meeting was held in the Hamilton County Court-house. The courageous Birney attended and, upon being granted permission to speak, pleaded so eloquently that the crowd abstained from violence, as may have been the earlier intention. But, according to one observer, such indignation was expressed at his extreme views that the chairman requested him to sit down before he had finished his talk.³³ After this meeting quiet reigned in Cincinnati for a number of months.

But, on July 12, 1836, a mob attacked the *Philanthropist* establishment, which had been transferred to Cincinnati in the spring, destroying much property and dismantling the press. Handbills were then issued by public officials warning against the reestablishment of the paper. The *Philanthropist*, however, reappeared at once, and on July 15, carried this editorial:

"This outrage on the property and peace of a quiet and law-abiding citizen—so well fitted to bring our city into disrepute—was altogether unexpected by Mr. Pugh [owner of the press], and, we believe, by all the orderly portion of our population. Indeed, there is some reason to suspect that this invasion of our peace has been projected and executed—partially, at least—by persons residing in Kentucky."³⁴ A large public meeting, therefore, assembled at the Lower Market House, on July 23. One resolution declared that those opposed to the activities of the abolitionists drew inspiration from the Boston Tea Party in proceeding against those activities, which by the existing laws were "shielded from legal abatement." The meeting was presided over by the venerable preacher-postmaster, William Burke, and a committee, composed of such men as Jacob Burnet and Nicholas Longworth, was appointed to warn Birney to desist from publishing the *Philanthropist*.³⁵ He refused, and, accordingly on the night of July 30,

³² Cincinnati Gazette, Jan. 22, 1836.

³³ William Birney, *James G. Birney and His Times* (New York, 1890), 204-19; Cincinnati Gazette, Jan. 27, 1836.

³⁴ *Philanthropist*, July 15, 1836.

³⁵ Cincinnati Advertiser, July 27, 1836.

a mob broke into the printing shop, tore down the presses and threw them into the river before proceeding to terrorize the negro district. When Birney, who was away, returned to the city the next morning he was secreted by friends until the furor blew over.³⁶ Birney's agitation had been especially repellent to Cincinnatians at that time because of the efforts that were then being made to develop further trade with the South and because of the measures that were being taken to secure the development of a Charleston and Cincinnati railroad.³⁷ The destruction of the property of those associated with the *Philanthropist* and the insecurity of Birney's life during the excitement stirred indignation in various parts of the State. It was rumored in Cincinnati that Salmon P. Chase, then a prospering young lawyer of the city, had offered \$10,000 for the support of an abolition press. He denied this but sent his views to a local newspaper:

"I now reiterate the sentiment I then avowed; sooner than see *Any Press*, however obnoxious, destroyed and put to silence by unlawful force, I would make almost any sacrifice. Much as I have deprecated the course of the Abolitionists, I regard all the consequences of their publications, as evils comparatively light, when contrasted with the evils produced by the prevalence of the mob spirit. *Freedom of the press and constitutional Liberty must live or perish together.*"³⁸

The purposes of Birney and his fellow abolitionists were at that time primarily non-political and "religious" in their implications.³⁹ Birney was eager to aid the cause of emancipation, whenever possible, and in his zeal shortly found himself within the clutches of the law. A mulatto girl, Matilda, en route with her master who was also her father, Larkin Lawrence, from Maryland to Missouri, escaped from the steamer while it anchored for twenty-four hours at Cincinnati. She was thereupon employed by

³⁶ Dumond, *Antislavery Origins*, 55-6.

³⁷ Cleveland *Daily Herald*, Aug. 6, 1836.

³⁸ Cincinnati *Gazette*, Aug. 4, 1836; MS. copy in Chase MSS.

³⁹ *Philanthropist*, Dec. 30, 1836.

Birney and kept out of sight for several months. After her presence was discovered, she was taken before Judge David K. Este of the court of common pleas. Salmon P. Chase, although not then an abolitionist, took the case, but Este decided that the status of Matilda had not been affected by her passage through a free State, and she was returned to her slave condition. Under an Ohio law of January, 1804, Birney was then found guilty of harboring or secreting a black or mulatto person, and after a jury trial was fined \$50 and costs. Chase, however, appealed the case, which was discharged on a technicality by the Supreme Court of the State.⁴⁰

During 1837 antislavery agitation continued. Another convention of the Ohio Anti-slavery Society met in April, 1837, and an impartial editor estimated the number of regularly organized societies at over two hundred. The *Philanthropist* opposed the formation of "an ordinary political party" on antislavery principles because such a course would bring mercenary individuals into the party and raise the difficulty of reconciling the very diverse views of the abolitionists upon other matters of public policy.⁴¹

In the meantime, a problem closely related to the slavery controversy was the presentation of petitions to Congress. The South had become irritated by the numerous petitions praying for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia or in the territories, and the matter had become an issue in Congress in 1835. In January, 1836, John C. Calhoun had opposed the reception of two antislavery petitions from Ohio in the Senate, but the upper house was not prepared to repudiate the sacred "right of petition," and such petitions, which were uniformly rejected, continued to pour into the Senate. Thus, early in 1838, for example, Senator William Allen presented two petitions from Garrettsville, Portage County,⁴² one from thirteen ladies asking the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia and another signed by fifteen men and

⁴⁰ *Cincinnati Gazette*, Mar. 21, 25, Apr. 6, 7, 10, 1837; R. B. Warden, *Salmon P. Chase* (Cincinnati, 1874), 282-3.

⁴¹ Issue of Sept. 8, 1837.

⁴² *Columbus Ohio Statesman*, Feb. 3, 1838.

fifteen ladies against the annexation of Texas. In the House, however, the so-called "Gag rule" was adopted. This was opposed by Adams, who was warmly supported by Hammond in the *Cincinnati Gazette*, which denounced the South's "unconstitutional attitude" and endorsed Adams' defense of "one of the great fundamental rights of freemen." Hammond, moreover, personally wrote to Adams expressing his approval of the former President's course, and the latter replied with appreciation of the cheer and encouragement which Hammond's support had given him during his "severe trial."⁴³ In 1838, Joshua R. Giddings of Jefferson was elected to the House and became a staunch ally of Adams in the petition fight. He enjoyed heated personal controversies. He was a hypochondriac and something of an exhibitionist, characteristics



31. JOSHUA REED GIDDINGS

(1795-1864)

Ohio congressman (1838-59), a militant antislavery leader. From *Biographical Encyclopaedia of Ohio* (Cincinnati, 1876), facing p. 508.

which explain in part the intensity of his views.⁴⁴ Yet, any lover of freedom could not help but be moved by such sights as Giddings viewed in the city of Washington. He wrote in his diary:

"This day a coffle of about sixty slaves, males and females, passed through the streets of Washington chained together on their way South. They were accompanied by a huge waggon in which were placed the more feeble females and children of such tender years as to be unable to walk. . . . A man was on horseback with a huge whip in his hand with which he occasionally chastised those who through fatigue or indolence were tardy in their movements. This was done in the daytime, in public view of all who at the time

⁴³ Weisenburger, *Life of Charles Hammond*, 83.

⁴⁴ Giddings MSS.

happened to be situated so as to view the barbarous spectacle.”⁴⁵

In the Senate, the most ardent supporter of antislavery views in 1838 was Thomas Morris of Ohio, sometimes called the first “abolition Senator.” He had introduced the petitions from citizens of Ohio in January, 1836, that had led to Calhoun’s attempt to impose a gag rule on the Senate. Morris’ personal reactions were recorded in his private memorandum book: “Resolutions have been introduced declaring, that we have no right—either political, moral, or religious—to discuss the institutions of any State, with a view to effect a change in those institutions. The object is to prevent the discussion of slavery in any of the States; but the Resolutions strike at all discussion. I regard these Resolutions as the most daring attempt against American liberty, that has yet been brought forward in Congress, since the foundation of the Republic, and as such I oppose them.”⁴⁶

In view of Morris’ decided stand on the slavery controversy, much interest was displayed in the question of his reelection in the late fall of 1838. Morris had been asked a series of questions by a Democratic committee of members of the legislature and had replied in favor of the independent treasury and other proposals of the Van Buren Administration. On the slavery question, however, he took very advanced ground: “I have always believed slavery to be wrong, in principle, in practice, in every country and under every condition of things. So radically wrong, that no time, place, or circumstance can palliate it, or give it even the appearance of being right, and that American slavery is the most obnoxious of its kind, a libel upon our republican institutions, and ruinous to the best interests of our country.”⁴⁷

He denied any constitutional guarantee of the right of the master to his slave, asserting the opinion that Congress would ultimately abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, unless it should surrender control over that area. To avoid difficulty on this ques-

⁴⁵ Entry of Jan. 30, 1839, in “Diary of Three Months,” *ibid.*

⁴⁶ Entry of Jan. 3, 1838, quoted in B. F. Morris, *Life of Thomas Morris* (Cincinnati, 1856), 105-6.

⁴⁷ Letter dated Nov. 23, *Ohio Statesman*, Nov. 30, 1838, from Cincinnati *Advertiser*.

tion, he offered the amazing suggestion of the "instant removal" of the seat of Government into a free state, and a recession of the District to the states of Virginia and Maryland, intimating that Cincinnati might be a satisfactory new location. As to the prohibition of slavery in the territories he had "no doubt" of congressional power, and he was "equally clear" as to its desirability. The Fugitive Slave Law of 1793, he asserted, was "unconstitutional, and in degradation of State sovereignty, and ought to be repealed." He denied, however, the right of Congress to interfere in any way with slavery within a state; and he opposed the idea of political and social equality for the Negro, though he saw evidences of "the most cheering character" that without "violence and blood" another quarter of a century would see the country freed "from the odious traffic in slaves" and "from the foul stains of slavery itself."

Such an extreme and unequivocal expression of opinion made Morris' reelection by a legislature of his own party, the Democratic, a virtual impossibility. Numerous other candidates were mentioned, including Robert Lytle and Joseph Benham of Cincinnati, William L. Helfenstein of Dayton, Thomas L. Hamer of Brown County, and John W. Willey of Cuyahoga County.⁴⁸ These aspirants had also been questioned by the party leaders when the caucus met on the evening of December 17. Since Morris was being rejected largely because of his antislavery opinions, it was deemed wise to select a candidate who would not alienate the good will of the opponents of slavery in the party. The choice accordingly fell to Benjamin Tappan of Steubenville, long a radical leader in the party. He definitely was not then an abolitionist, though a brother of Arthur and Lewis Tappan, antislavery leaders of New York City. The vote in the legislature on December 20, was: Tappan, 57; Thomas Ewing (Whig), 50; Reuben Wood, 1.⁴⁹

Tappan was an individualist of conspicuous talents and strong democratic principles, but his "intractable disposition" had not

⁴⁸ Cincinnati Gazette, Nov. 20, 1838; Ohio Statesman, Nov. 9, 1838.

⁴⁹ Ibid., Dec. 21, 26, 31, 1838; Philanthropist (New Richmond; Cincinnati), Jan. 1, 1839.

always made him popular with party members. He was known as one who was religiously unorthodox, having revolted against the narrow prejudices of his Massachusetts boyhood environment, and this made his selection none too popular in religious circles. A month before Tappan's election, Joshua R. Giddings received a call from him in Washington and was again impressed as to the "leading traits" which he himself shared with Tappan. He commented: "He possesses great shrewdness and penetration, judges of mankind with great correctness and is exceedingly shrewd and discriminating in most of the transactions of life. But he possesses too much independence of feeling or rather he is too unyielding in his opinions to be popular. Hence he had ever been unable to obtain political preferment or if once obtained he could never continue long in public favor although he is admitted by all parties to be a man of the first order of talents."⁵⁰

The question of the senatorship was only one of several questions associated with slavery which troubled members of the Ohio legislature during the session of 1838-39. Benjamin Wade, who was then serving his first term in the State Senate and who represented the point of view of the abolitionist Whigs of the Western Reserve, presented a memorial asserting the right of Congress to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia and in the territories and to stop the interstate slave trade. When it was proposed that the memorial be laid upon the table, he asserted his determination to have the matter referred to a committee, and he declared that he would, if necessary, make such a motion every day during the session. The memorial was finally referred to the judiciary committee.⁵¹ At about the same time a petition was introduced into the Ohio House of Representatives from certain colored persons who asked that the law which prohibited them from testifying in the courts of justice be changed. Several Whigs spoke in favor of receiving it, while the opposition was composed chiefly of Demo-

⁵⁰ Joshua R. Giddings to Flavel Sutliff, Wheeling, Nov. 25, 1838, Giddings MSS.; "Diary of Three Months," entry of Nov. 27, 1838, *ibid*.

⁵¹ *Ohio Statesman*, Jan. 2, 1839.

crats. The number of similar petitions increased as the matter became one for animated discussion.⁵²

Representative George H. Flood of Licking County, representing the Democratic majority in the lower house, at length introduced a series of resolutions covering these questions in a manner intended to rebuke the abolitionists.⁵³ These resolutions, which passed the House, declared that (1) Congress had no control over slavery in the states; (2) abolitionist agitation produced no beneficial results; (3) the wild plans of antislavery leaders tended to disrupt the Union; (4) any attempt to interfere with slavery by congressional action was unconstitutional; (5) black and mulatto residents of Ohio had no constitutional right to present any petitions to the Ohio legislature.⁵⁴ The *Philanthropist* termed these resolutions a Democratic maneuver to show fealty to the South and to link abolitionism with Whigism, an evidence that the legislators had "bowed their necks to the southern task-master." On the other hand, the vote of the entire Whig delegation of the Western Reserve against the resolutions was said by the Democratic press to be an indication that Whigs on the Reserve had "fallen into the fond embrace of abolitionism."⁵⁵

The so-called Mahan affair of 1838 had led to increasing dissatisfaction in Kentucky as to relations with Ohio in regard to slave property.⁵⁶ Accordingly, the legislature of Kentucky designated two commissioners, James T. Morehead (Whig) and John Speed Smith (Democrat), to confer with Ohio on the problem. The commissioners went to Columbus, and Governor Wilson Shannon submitted a communication from them as a part of a special message to the legislature. As a result, a bill providing for the more effective return of fugitive slaves than that provided for in the Federal act of 1793, passed the House in February. It

⁵² *Ibid.*, Jan. 14, 1839; *Cincinnati Gazette*, Jan. 15, 1839.

⁵³ *Ohio Statesman*, Jan. 14, 16, 1839.

⁵⁴ T. C. Smith, *Liberty and Free Soil Parties in the Northwest* (New York, 1897), 22.

⁵⁵ *Philanthropist*, Jan. 29, 1839; *Ohio Statesman*, Feb. 8, 1839.

⁵⁶ For the Mahan episode see p. 349-50.

met with considerable opposition in the Senate, especially from Wade, but finally became law. Upon affidavit of a slave owner or his agent, any judge, justice of the peace, or mayor, was required to issue a warrant, presentable to any sheriff to arrest the fugitive and bring him to trial. If the claimant could satisfy the court that he possessed a legal right to the slave, then a certificate was to be issued for the removal of the slave from the State. Any person interfering with the execution of the warrant or aiding in the escape of a fugitive might be fined not more than five hundred dollars and imprisoned for not more than sixty days.

During 1839 and 1840, there was much discussion of abolitionism. A series of debates was held in Cincinnati in March, 1839, between Ralph R. Gurley, an agent of the American Colonization Society, and Jonathan Blanchard, pastor of the Sixth Presbyterian Church, on the subject: "Is the American Colonization Society worthy of the confidence and charities of the American people?" Interest increased with discussion, which tended to arouse concern on two points, that southern trade might be diverted from Cincinnati as a protest against abolitionist sentiment and that the Whig Party might find itself embarrassed in attempting to meet the demands of abolitionists and antiabolitionists within its ranks.⁵⁷ Publicists found it exceedingly difficult to follow a course which would be satisfactory to both sides. Joshua L. Wilson, venerable and conservative pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Cincinnati, delivered two sermons in February on the "Relations and Duties of Servants and Masters," sustaining the lawfulness of existing civil relations from the standpoint of religion, only to invoke severe rebukes from antislavery circles. Wilson then denied that he had spoken in favor of slavery, saying that he had merely expounded the Epistle to the Ephesians. On the other hand, Charles Hammond, the independent editor of the Cincinnati *Gazette*, hinted that colonization was merely a sop offered by slaveholders to public sentiment, and declared himself opposed to slavery and to the gag resolutions only to receive reproof from

⁵⁷ Cincinnati *Gazette*, Mar. 2, 4, 8, 9, 12, 13, Apr. 11, May 2, 1839.

the other Whig editors of the city, though he declared that he also opposed abolitionist organizations.⁵⁸

Caleb Atwater in his new *History of Ohio* (1838) declared that there were 17,000 abolitionists in the State, and in Trumbull County alone in 1839 there were 2,249 enrolled members, not including several hundred sympathizers who were not officially affiliated.⁵⁹ In the latter part of May, the Ohio Anti-slavery Convention, which had met in Mt. Pleasant, Belmont County, in 1837 and had been hospitably entertained in Granville in 1838—in contrast with the reception in that village in 1836—was held in Putnam, opposite Zanesville, with about five hundred persons in attendance. At this gathering a letter from a committee of the Medina Anti-slavery Society was read, protesting against the political course of the State society. The State convention, on the contrary, adopted a resolution, on the motion of James G. Birney, that such persons should be endorsed for office who favored the abrogation of all distinctions in rights based upon color. Other resolutions lauded the course of Thomas Morris and opposed the new Ohio Fugitive Slave Law and attempts to abridge the right of petition in Congress.⁶⁰

Many of the abolitionists were violent partisans on other matters than slavery.⁶¹ In southern Ohio candidates for public office were often careful to deny abolition tendencies, but on the Western Reserve Joshua R. Giddings freely acknowledged that he urged “the impropriety of selling slaves at public auction” and that he deprecated the slave trade in the District of Columbia. Benjamin F. Wade, who sought reelection to the Ohio Senate, ran on a Whig abolitionist ticket against another Whig candidate, but was defeated. In most of the counties on the Reserve the abolitionists found candidates of the major parties who were acceptable to them, and the American Anti-slavery Society in convention at

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, Feb. 22, Mar. 19, 20, 22, Apr. 4, 8, 24, May 6, 9, 1839.

⁵⁹ *Ohio Statesman*, Jan. 7, 1839; *Philanthropist*, May 7, 1839.

⁶⁰ *Ohio Statesman*, June 25, 1839; Jan. 28, 1840.

⁶¹ *Philanthropist*, Aug. 13, 1839.

Cleveland late in October decided that for the present a bargaining with the candidates of the major parties was preferable to separate party organization. The *Philanthropist* stated that three hundred and sixty of the four hundred delegates at this convention were from Ohio.⁶² The elections of 1839 in Ohio were far from satisfactory to the abolitionists, for the Democrats (who had declined to reelect the abolitionist Morris) were given a larger majority than in 1838.⁶³

In the meantime, Morris had made himself thoroughly obnoxious to the leaders of the Democratic Party in the State. In February, when Clay made a notable speech in the Senate against slavery agitation, Morris engaged him in the first great debate on that question in the upper house.⁶⁴ Then, in the fall Morris made numerous public addresses against slavery and participated for a week in a joint debate with two Democratic politicians who favored the retention of the State's "black laws."⁶⁵ To combat Morris' extreme views, Representative Flood early in January introduced resolutions into the Ohio House of Representatives, that it was unwise and unconstitutional for citizens of one state to interfere with the domestic institutions of another and that it was the duty of good citizens to discountenance abolitionists. Probably this procedure was to prepare sentiment for the Democratic State Convention at Columbus, January 8, to which Morris was a delegate from Hamilton County. At the convention similar resolutions against abolitionist agitation were accepted. During the proceedings Morris began to voice opposition, but he was not an eloquent speaker, and his unpopular views caused him to be "coughed down." Thereupon, another delegate, William Sawyer of Montgomery County, who had voted seven years before in the legislature for Morris for senator, arose and declared that the Democratic Party had no affinity with abolitionists, and that Morris

⁶² Nov. 19, 1839; *Ohio Statesman*, Nov. 5, 1839.

⁶³ *Philanthropist*, Nov. 19, 1839.

⁶⁴ Dumond, *Antislavery Origins*, 85-6.

⁶⁵ Smith, *Liberty and Free Soil Parties*, 41.

was "a rotten branch that should be lopped off." This extraordinary procedure was greeted with shouts, "Agreed! Agreed! Let him go! Turn him out of the party, and all abolitionists with him!" Morris withdrew from the convention.⁶⁶

In the fall of 1839 some Ohio abolitionists, *e.g.*, the editor of the Painesville *Republican*, stressed the desirability of a third party, but the *Philanthropist* emphatically opposed. Considerable consolation, in view of existing political conditions, was expressed at the nomination of William Henry Harrison rather than Clay by the Whig convention in Harrisburg in December, 1839. Yet, the *Philanthropist* pointed out that the former had not made a public statement on the question in almost five years, and some of the abolitionist papers of the State which hoisted Harrison's name to the head of their columns, omitted that of John Tyler.

At the State Anti-slavery Convention at Massillon, May 28, with five hundred delegates in attendance, the political question proved to be more engrossing than ever before. All agreed that anti-slavery men should utilize their right of suffrage to aid the cause and should permit no party interest to interfere with that end, but the majority still felt that the society should not be turned into a political party. Individual members were permitted discretion as to whether they could best serve the cause by refraining from voting, by scattering votes, or by organizing a third party.⁶⁷ A definite feeling soon crystallized, however, to the effect that Harrison's utterances were not satisfactory to the abolitionists and that a separate candidate for the Presidency should be selected. The *Ohio Free Press* (Xenia) called for another convention at Hamilton, Ohio, September 1, to consider once more the question of political action. One hundred and seventy delegates were in attendance. By a vote of 87 to 39, it was resolved that the Whig and Democratic nominees had forfeited any claim to the support of the convention, and by the narrow vote of 57 to 34, the Liberty

⁶⁶ *Philanthropist*, Nov. 26, Dec. 10, 1839; Feb. 4, 1840; *Ohio Statesman*, Dec. 26, 1839; Feb. 10, 1840.

⁶⁷ *Philanthropist*, June 9, 1840.

Party candidates, James G. Birney and Thomas Earle, were endorsed. Thus was organized the Liberty Party in Ohio. Most Ohio antislavery leaders such as Leicester King of Trumbull County, president of the Ohio Anti-slavery Society, Benjamin Wade, and Joshua R. Giddings remained in the Whig camp, and the leadership of the new party fell to Gamaliel Bailey, who had replaced Birney as editor of the *Philanthropist*, and Morris. Some difficulty was encountered in securing an electoral ticket, and in practically all contests for State offices, support was urged for the least objectionable of the major candidates. As to the candidates for governor, the *Philanthropist* declared that Shannon (Democrat) was decidedly hostile and that while there existed "no insuperable objection" to Corwin (Whig), it was not to his credit that he had never made "a single effort in behalf of freedom's cause."⁶⁸

The casting of only 892 votes for Birney in Ohio in the Presidential election of 1840 was not particularly encouraging, but the *Philanthropist* declared that it was not "disheartened," for a nucleus for further action had been created.⁶⁹ Enthusiasm for the cause was not stifled and on January 20-21, 1841, another antislavery State convention met in Columbus with delegates present from thirty-six counties. A resolution urged the continuance of independent nominations, and provision was made for the appointment of delegates to attend the national antislavery convention the following June.⁷⁰

During this period one resident of Ohio who later played a major role in the antislavery movement was not, at the time, an avowed abolitionist. Harriet Beecher Stowe, the wife of a rather impecunious theological professor at Lane Seminary, carefully observed various phases of the slave system, including life on a Kentucky plantation. Afterwards, she utilized her experience to produce opinion-molding stories, especially *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.⁷¹

⁶⁸ Cincinnati Gazette, July 21, 1840; *Philanthropist*, Sept. 8, 29, Oct. 13, 1840.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, Nov. 11, Dec. 23, 1840.

⁷⁰ *Ohio State Journal*, Jan. 25, 1841; *Philanthropist*, Feb. 3, 17, 1841.

⁷¹ *Dictionary of American Biography*, ed. by Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone (New York, 1928-1937), XVIII, 115-20.

CHAPTER XIV

A President from Ohio

THE election of Martin Van Buren in 1836 had not destroyed the enthusiasm of the western Whigs. Though some opposed the move as premature, an Ohio Whig convention as early as July 4, 1837, advocated a national convention to meet at Pittsburgh in June, 1838, to nominate a candidate, and expressed Ohio's preference for William Henry Harrison. At a public dinner on July 4, toasts were drunk to Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, and Harrison.¹ Early in 1838, Harrison's friends in Ohio became uneasy because of the lack of enthusiasm for their favorite in the East, and a Cincinnati meeting at the court-house definitely nominated Harrison for President. Former Senator Jacob Burnet acted as chairman, the Cincinnati *Express* became the especial organ of the Harrison movement, and other Whig newspapers announced that only very powerful reasons would induce them to change from a preference for "Tippecanoe."² With a zest for organization apparent in their ranks, the Whig State Central Committee urged the holding of county conventions. By the early part of May, twenty-seven such gatherings had endorsed Harrison, with four expressing a preference for Clay. Within a few days three other counties declared for Clay. The Whig State Convention was held May 31, when over two thousand delegates, representing sixty-five of the seventy-six counties were in attendance. Among the resolutions adopted was one expressing "undiminished confidence" in Harrison and presenting his name to the national convention but pledging "cordial support to the nomination of that convention, should it fall on either of the other distinguished

¹ Columbus *Ohio State Journal*, June 9, July 7, Oct. 27, 1837; Cincinnati *Gazette*, Aug. 1, Nov. 15, 1837.

² *Ibid.*, Jan. 19, 1838; *Ohio State Journal*, Jan. 26, Feb. 2, 1838.

statesmen, Henry Clay or Daniel Webster." This cautious policy was endorsed not only by local Whig papers but by the leading party organs in New York and Washington.³ A few weeks after the State convention Harrison made a trip to Massillon for the Fourth of July festivities there and for a public dinner at Cadiz. In the course of the journey he came in contact with many thousands of citizens. Wilson Shannon, Democratic candidate for governor, was the rival attraction of a Democratic meeting at Massillon on the same day, and he too continued his appearances before the public at numerous meetings during the succeeding weeks.⁴

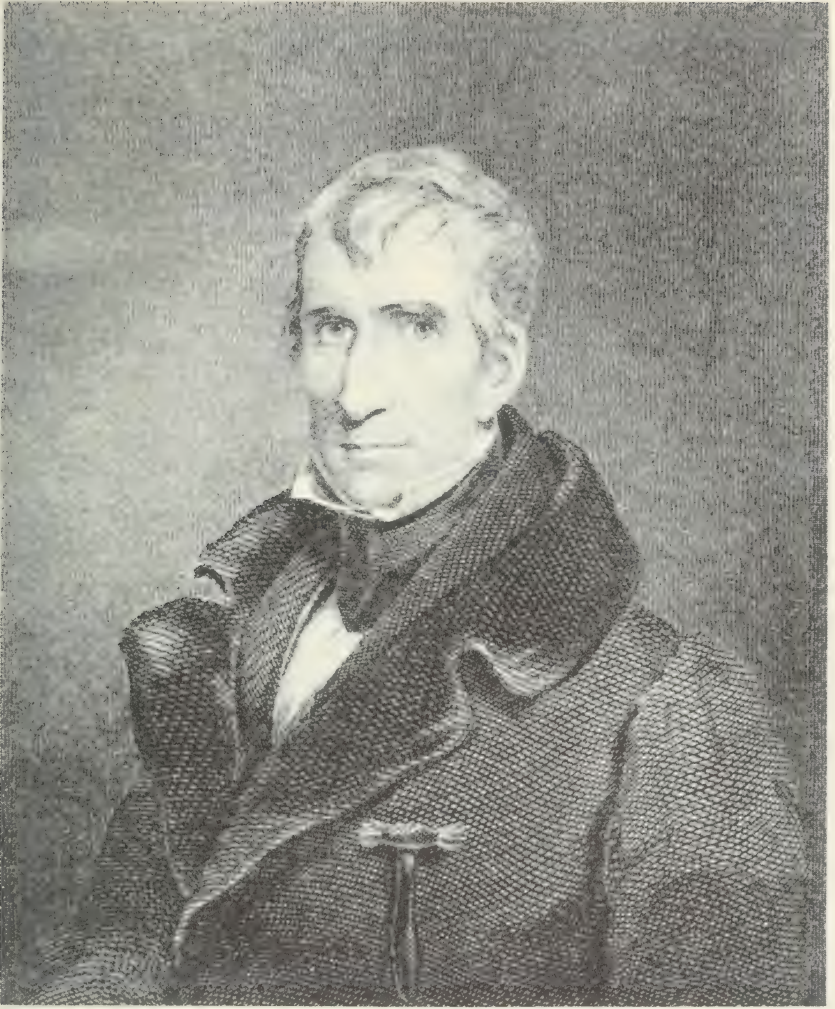
As the months went by it became increasingly difficult for Whig papers to satisfy all concerned. The Wellsville *Advertiser* carried the names of Clay, Webster, and Harrison at the head of its editorial columns and revolved the order of the names each week. The Cincinnati *Whig* declared for Harrison, and the Toledo *Blade* for Clay. The *Ohio State Journal* (Columbus) complained that it was being scolded by the Clay papers of the north for its Harrison tendencies, while the ultra Harrison editors of southern Ohio treated it with coolness because of its lack of zeal for their favorite; and the *Gazette* of Cincinnati bewailed the fact that discussion within the party was "fast festering into an incurable ulcer." Apparently, southern and central Ohio, especially the rural areas, were devoted to Harrison, while Clay's friends were powerful in the north, particularly on the Reserve.⁵

The overwhelming defeat of the Whigs in the State elections of 1839 seemed to indicate a need for a more decisive declaration for Harrison. Hammond of the *Gazette* had emphasized "the eminent fitness of Mr. Clay, for the office of President," but cited history to show "how frequently in free governments the true patriot has sunk, and the unhallowed demagogue been elevated."

³ Cincinnati *Gazette*, Jan. 25, Mar. 8, June 5, 1838; *Ohio State Journal*, Feb. 13, 16, 27, Mar. 2, 6, 13, Apr. 4, May 9, 16, 23, June 6, 20, 1838.

⁴ *Ibid.*, July 4, 19, Aug. 1, 1838; Columbus *Ohio Statesman*, July 10, 17, Aug. 17, 1838.

⁵ *Ohio State Journal*, Dec. 28, 1838, Jan. 22, June 5, July 9, 19, 1839; Cincinnati *Gazette*, Mar. 30, May 14, 1839.



32. WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON (1773-1841)

Senator from Ohio (1825-28) and first Ohioan to become President of the United States. From *Biographical Encyclopaedia of Ohio* (Cincinnati, 1876), facing p. 331.

He stressed the harmful effects of two Clay defeats and the false "corrupt bargain" charge and pointed out the acceptability of Harrison to the "Conservatives," the Antimasons, and Abolitionists.⁶ In early July, 1839, Clay passed through Ohio via Springfield and Tiffin on his first visit to Niagara Falls. If electioneering was his intention, he was disappointed, for by November, of over a hundred Whig papers in Ohio, all except five which adhered to Clay and two (the *Conneaut, Ohio, Gazette* and the *Sandusky, Ohio, Whig*) which supported Winfield Scott, spoke of Harrison as their favorite.⁷

Interest among the Whigs was rapidly centering on the State party convention at Columbus, February 22, 1840. Though the weather was rainy, delegations were present from every part of the State. Cuyahoga County sent eighty delegates with a full-rigged "brig," *William Henry Harrison*, drawn by eight horses. Ross County alone sent seven hundred delegates, and on the day before the convention, a procession two miles long entered the city from the West. A preliminary meeting, February 21, was presided over by James Wilson of Steubenville (grandfather of the future President, who was described by a Democratic paper as an individual who "lives on the interest of bank stocks" and other investments). General Reasin Beall of Wooster, ensign with Harrison under Anthony Wayne in 1792, was chosen president, and ten delegates from each congressional district were appointed to name the candidate for governor.⁸

The enthusiasm of the next day was prophetic of the nature of the campaign in the following months. In the parade, in large "cars" drawn by four horses were twenty bands, stirring the emotions of the crowd with such tunes as the *Marseillaise*. Immense canoes, each carrying from fifty to eighty men, and one bearing a huge buckeye tree forty feet in height, were each drawn by eight

⁶ Oct. 4, 1839.

⁷ *Ohio Statesman*, July 12, 16, Aug. 2, 9, 1839; *Ohio State Journal*, Nov. 8, 15, 19, 1839.

⁸ *Ohio Statesman*, Feb. 24, 1840.

beautiful horses. Lewis Bowyer, of Miami County, supposedly the last of Washington's body-guards, was mounted on a white horse and held the bridle of another horse which carried a saddle claimed to have been used by the Father of his Country. Banners of all sorts were in evidence. One represented the "Farmer of North Bend" halting his plow and team in the furrow while he refreshed himself with a cup of hard cider.⁹

Former Governor Joseph Vance having declined to allow his name to be considered for the governorship, the nomination fell to Thomas Corwin of Lebanon. Resolutions were adopted, declaring among other things for the restriction of the Presidential powers of appointment and removal and for a single Presidential term, and denouncing "the specious and delusive theory" of hard money and "that system of political aggrandizement" known as "Bank Reform." Before the month was over the first Tippecanoe club of Columbus had been organized, and within a few weeks calls were issued for ward meetings of the "Harrison Democrats" in Cincinnati. Publishers brought out new papers, such as the *Log Cabin Advocate* of Dayton and the *Log Cabin Herald* of Chillicothe, and almost every important community raised a log cabin as a center of political activity. A typical cabin was that dedicated at Ohio City (Cleveland) on March 18. The door had the usual wooden latch and string, and inside were strips of dried pumpkin and strings of dried peppers (for the hard cider) dangling from a line, the rifle resting in hooks from a rough beam above, the pouch and horn, with antlers, skins, and an axe appropriately arranged, and the splint broom and various eatables adding to the completeness of the picture.¹⁰

One of the most enthusiastic Whig gatherings of the campaign was at Ft. Meigs (near Toledo) to commemorate its siege under Harrison during the War of 1812. Harrison's journey from North Bend to the celebration was in itself a campaign tour. Successive

⁹ *Ohio State Journal*, Feb. 22, 24, 25, 26, 29, 1840; *Cincinnati Gazette*, Feb. 25, 1840.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, May 19, June 10, 1840; *Ohio State Journal*, Mar. 10, 21, 1840.

nights were spent at Columbus, Delaware, Bucyrus, and Sandusky, and all along the line he made speeches and received delegations of citizens who escorted him into the towns through which he passed. Half-fare rates were offered by the coach lines, and forty thousand persons were said to have attended the celebration. Well-known dramatic devices were employed to arouse enthusiasm. During the address, "Old Tip," pointing to a spot near-by, declared: "It was there, fellow citizens, I saw the banner of the United States float in triumph over the flag of the enemy. . . . It was there I beheld the indignant Eagle frown upon the British Lion."

Basing his appeal on his past career, Harrison refused to make pledges; but in a gesture toward the soldier vote of the Nation, he spoke of America's neglect of the veterans of Wayne's army and promised to do all within his power to remedy the situation.¹¹ Returning from this gathering, Harrison journeyed eastward to Cleveland where he delivered a long speech from the balcony of the American House. After a sojourn of two days in this vicinity he went southward via the Ohio Canal to Newark, thence via Columbus and Springfield to North Bend.

Local Whig meetings were innumerable, and seemingly every excuse was utilized as the occasion for a celebration. Thus, Harrison was called upon to attend a large meeting at old Fort Greenville late in July, and early in September, the State Central Committee urged the holding of county meetings on October 5, the anniversary of the Battle of the Thames, for "perfecting the organization" of the various counties. The anniversary of the Battle of Lake Erie gave Harrison an opportunity for a campaign tour through the Miami Valley, terminating with a gigantic meeting on September 10, at Dayton, where one hundred thousand persons were said to have been present.¹² On this occasion Harrison denied that he was in the habit of concealing his opinions merely because he refused to give any pledges. In his expression of opinion in

¹¹ *Ibid.*, June 19, 1840; *Cincinnati Gazette*, June 23, 1840.

¹² *Ibid.*, Aug. 4, 1840; *Ohio State Journal*, June 23, Sept. 8, 22, 1840.

regard to a United States bank, however, he was extremely ambiguous, and persons on both sides of the question could hardly have been offended by his remarks.¹³

Not to be outdone by the Whigs of the Miami Valley, those in the Scioto Valley staged a great meeting at Chillicothe, September 17-18, with Harrison and former governors, James Turner Morehead and Thomas Metcalfe, of Kentucky attending, and "Old Tip" making a speech two and three-quarter hours in length. The first week in October found Harrison visiting the counties in the vicinity of Wooster for a series of addresses.

At the same time elaborate arrangements were made to give recognition to the "Original Jackson Men" now affiliated with the Whig cause. Major John H. Eaton, Jackson's secretary of war, spoke in Columbus, September 15, declaring that the standing army plan of the Administration was unconstitutional and that he was opposed to Van Buren. A special "Original Jackson men's" convention was held at Columbus, September 25, with John Tyler as the chief speaker.¹⁴ The eloquent Corwin, candidate for governor, made six speeches during the last week of August in the Western Reserve, at meetings attended in all by crowds estimated at fifty-three thousand. Francis Granger, who had come from New York state to assist, wrote from Cleveland: "The convention at this place was very large but not to compare with that in Old Trumbull where there were at least 20,000 people. They do up these things in a style far beyond us in New York. I have never seen matters so well managed. . . . Corwin and Ewing are making the tour of the State with prodigious effect. There is hardly a stronger 'two cattle team' in the nation."¹⁵

A German Whig paper, the *Ohio Staats-Zeitung*, had been launched in Columbus in the summer of 1839, and an approved *Life of Harrison* was printed in German. The field of music was

¹³ Cincinnati Gazette, Sept. 12, 15, 1840.

¹⁴ Ohio State Journal, Sept. 8, 14, 15, 22, 25, 29, 1840.

¹⁵ To Thurlow Weed, Cleveland, Ohio, Sept. 2, 1840, Granger MSS. (in Library of Congress).

also exploited with the publication of *The Log Cabin Song Book*, selling for twenty-five cents and containing such songs as "General Harrison's Quick Step," "The Whig Waltz," and the "Harrison Song."¹⁶

The Democrats, though handicapped by Harrison's residence in the State, were active in township and county meetings. Special newspapers were published, among them the Newark *Democratic Rasp*, the Canton *Hickory Club*, and the Xenia *Kinderhook Dutchman*. Moses Dawson, the ardent Cincinnati editor, who had once written a life of Harrison now produced a *Life of Van Buren* to be sold for fifty cents.¹⁷ "Hickory clubs" were formed to counteract the Log Cabin meetings, and special efforts were made to secure the German vote by the holding of German meetings.¹⁸ To counteract the effect of the numerous appearances of Harrison, the Democrats made extensive use in Ohio of Richard M. Johnson, their Vice-Presidential candidate. Jackson himself had written to Van Buren that Johnson was the weakest candidate possible for the Vice-Presidency and that if he took the field Harrison would be strengthened everywhere and "the Democracy when too late" would see their error; yet, beginning early in August, Johnson spent a major portion of his time in Ohio, campaigning usually with Shannon and Senator William Allen. His particular availability for this purpose was due to the fact that he, like Harrison, had been present at the Battle of the Thames in 1813. Johnson refused to charge Harrison with cowardice, as some Democrats wished him to do, but he maintained that the plan of attack on that occasion had been his own conception.¹⁹

Such arguments as were used in Ohio were similar to those employed in 1836. Charges were made that Harrison was a defaulter, that he had voted to "sell white men into slavery," that he had been immoral, and that he was a mere military chieftain.

¹⁶ Advertisement in *Ohio State Journal*, June 12, 1840.

¹⁷ *Ohio Statesman*, Mar. 6, 7, 11, 27, June 12, 16, July 3, 7, 10, Aug. 7, 1840.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, Sept. 4, 1840; *Ohio State Journal*, Apr. 3, 1840.

¹⁹ *Ohio Statesman*, Aug. 11-Oct. 9, 1840.

Democrats ridiculed the notion that Harrison's home bore any resemblance to a typical log cabin; they censured him for his evasion of the issues of the day and defended the Administration against the charge of having induced hard times. The Whigs ridiculed the alleged aristocratic life and luxurious practises of Van Buren; criticized his stand against universal manhood suffrage in New York's constitutional convention; and charged him with undue favoritism to the Catholic Church. Although the Liberty Party finally entered the field, most antislavery men remained in the Whig camp. Thomas Ritchie, the renowned Richmond (Virginia) editor, wrote to Allen of Ohio asking for copies of various Harrison abolitionist Ohio papers. He declared, "I want to expose this foul game, which the Whigs are playing, holding up Harrison to the South as Anti-Abolitionist and to the West and North, as the Abolition Candidate. . . . Aid me in stripping off this mask."²⁰

In June, Benjamin F. Wade wrote: "Old Tip is all the go hereabouts. We attend to nothing else. I have just returned from Fort Meigs and such a gathering there never was before nor never will be again until the final judgment when all the Vans assemble to be D—d."²¹ Samuel Medary, the usually sanguine Democratic leader of Columbus, wrote to Van Buren that he had never seen such a state of things as he had witnessed in Ohio, for it seemed "as though every man, woman, and child preferred politics to anything else."²² Similarly, James Buchanan reported that after conversing with many friends from Ohio he had found: "The excitement there seems to be without a parallel. It would seem almost that the whole population have abandoned their ordinary business for the purpose of electioneering."²³

Harrison believed that Ohio Democrats had placed their reliance upon representing him "as entirely decrepit and imbecile,"

²⁰ Thomas Ritchie to William Allen, Richmond, Feb. 16, 1840, Allen MSS. (in Library of Congress).

²¹ To Joshua R. Giddings, Jefferson, June 15, 1840, Giddings MSS.

²² Letter from Columbus, Aug. 18, 1840, Van Buren MSS.

²³ James Buchanan to Martin Van Buren, Lancaster, Pa., Sept. 25, 1840, *ibid.*

hence he accepted numerous invitations to tour the State and make addresses. Everywhere he found evidence that there was "not a township in the State" but contained many former Democrats who were rallying to his support, not to mention those Democrats who were secretly doing so. He was especially pleased with the strength of his voice which reached to "the outer edge of the multitudes" and enabled him to be heard when others could not be.²⁴

In Ohio, the elections were signal victories for the Whigs, twelve of whom were elected to Congress in contrast with seven Democrats. Corwin in the race for governor secured 145,441 votes to 129,312 for Shannon, while Harrison ran a trifle better, obtaining 148,157 votes to 124,782 for Van Buren and 892 for Birney, the Liberty Party candidate.²⁵ Even more significant, however, was the fact that the elections throughout the Nation for the first time brought a citizen of Ohio to the Presidency of the United States.

Harrison who remained in Ohio until the end of January was "literally overrun with applications for office" but he displayed great tact in ridding himself of the personal applicants. His Hamilton County friends, however, complained that his extreme reserve "even to his most intimate and influential" associates, had become a matter of surprise and disappointment to them. When Webster and John J. Crittenden of Kentucky were offered cabinet positions apparently Harrison's intimate friends, Jacob Burnet and Nathaniel G. Pendleton in Cincinnati, did not know of the offers until they read of them in a New York paper.²⁶

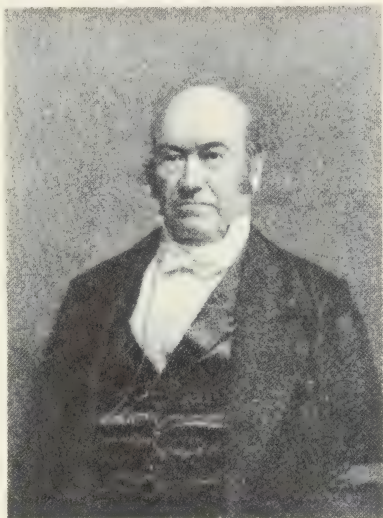
Justice John McLean, who had not been enthusiastic about Harrison's candidacy, was mentioned, probably rather quixotically, as a possible member of Harrison's cabinet, but it was Ewing who was almost universally regarded as the Ohioan most definitely entitled to recognition. Ewing was discussed in Whig circles as the

²⁴ William Henry Harrison to Henry Clay, June 21, 1840; *id.* to *id.*, Aug. 6, 1840, Clay MSS.

²⁵ Cincinnati *Gazette*, Oct. 20, Dec. 15, 18, 1840.

²⁶ James F. Conover to Daniel Webster, Cincinnati, Dec. 24, 1840, Webster MSS.

next postmaster-general or secretary of the treasury. Abbott Lawrence, prominent Bostonian, wrote that Ewing, taking "him all in all" was the best man for the Treasury Department in the entire country, for he enjoyed the confidence of the great rank and file as well as of the monied interests.²⁷ Ewing himself wrote that "between the two offices" he had little choice. Harrison at first had Ewing slated for the Post-office Department, but through Webster's intervention he appointed him secretary of the treasury. Thus Ewing became the first cabinet officer from Ohio. Return J. Meigs, Jr., and McLean, both from Ohio, had been postmasters-general but before the office had been of cabinet rank; Lewis Cass had been Jackson's secretary of war, but he had previously been governor of Michigan Territory for so long (1813-1831) as to have become a resident of Michigan.



33. THOMAS EWING (1789-1871)

A leading Ohio Whig, United States senator (1831-37), secretary of the treasury (1841), and secretary of the interior (1849-50). From *Biographical Encyclopaedia of Ohio* (Cincinnati, 1876), facing p. 460

Harrison faced great difficulties in the Presidency. Edwin M. Stanton wrote that as the boat carrying the President-elect to Pittsburgh on his way east touched at Steubenville "it was apparent from the conduct on the Boat" that he was regarded "even by his own party as an old imbecile."²⁸ Clay was none too considerate of the titular head of the Whig organization and finally Harrison was compelled to tell him rather tartly: "You use the privilege of a friend to lecture me and I will take the same liberty with you.

²⁷ Abbott Lawrence to John J. Crittenden, Boston, Jan. 7, 1841, Crittenden MSS. (in Library of Congress).

²⁸ To [Benjamin Tappan], Steubenville, Mar. 7, 1841, Stanton MSS. (in Library of Congress).

You are too impetuous. Much as I would rely upon your judgments there are others whom I must consult and in many cases [*sic*] to determine adversely to your suggestions.”²⁹

A politician in Columbus, who had “witnessed the crowds that daily” passed through that city journeying to Washington “for place and office as a just reward for labor done,” experienced “strong misgivings relative to the popularity and prosperity” of the new Administration.³⁰ James Wilson wrote from Steubenville that “laboring in a minority for 12 long years” had been discouraging and demanded positions for two of his sons. They were given minor places in Washington, but Wilson was not satisfied and said that he had “a right to *insist upon*” a restoration to the family’s Steubenville newspaper of the printing of the United States laws in eastern Ohio, and had a “right to *get mad*” if that were not done.³¹ Elisha Whittlesey, long an active Whig leader, from Canfield, received the fourth auditorship of the treasury, but many Ohioans were necessarily disappointed in the struggle for appointments.

In Ohio, members of the party rejoiced in what they professed to believe would be accomplished by the new Administration—the restoration of constitutional government with legislative supremacy, and the revival of honesty in the public service. Harrison’s death early in April, however, brought to the Presidency John Tyler of Virginia, a State-rights man, whose views were likely to create a serious rift in the party. Ohio Whigs endeavored to be cheerful of the prospects under the new President, but leaders among them felt that Harrison’s death was an irreparable loss.³² The Whig Party in Ohio had a small but rather vocal State-rights group that had played an important part in the Ohio Whig Convention of 1840. This group felt that the Nationalist Whigs, after

²⁹ Harrison to Clay, Washington, Mar. 13, 1841, Clay MSS.

³⁰ John Reeves to John McLean, Columbus, Feb. 23, 1841, McLean MSS.

³¹ F. P. Weisenburger, “Middle Western Antecedents of Woodrow Wilson,” in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* (Cedar Rapids, Iowa), XXIII (1936), 382–3.

³² E. A. Holt, *Party Politics in Ohio, 1840–1850* (Columbus, 1930), 160.

Harrison's election, had rather rudely brushed them aside and were not disappointed at Tyler's accession to power.³³

The party as a whole awaited with great interest Tyler's message of June, 1841, to the special session of Congress. In it, Tyler expressed doubt as to a "fiscal agent" which should be substituted for the independent treasury and suggested that he might veto any measure which he deemed unconstitutional. Most Ohio Whigs favored a national bank, and the President's message was damned with faint praise in the State. The personally ambitious Clay had already presented in Congress the program of the Nationalist Whigs: the repeal of the independent treasury, the establishment of a national bank, a tariff to provide adequate revenue, and the distribution among the states of the money received from public land sales.

Tyler agreed to the repeal of the independent treasury, but when a proposal for a national bank, drawn up by Ewing, was presented to Congress, some uncertainty existed as to the probable outcome. Early in June Tyler told Senator Benjamin Tappan of Ohio that he would "administer the government in all things upon Mr. Jefferson's principles," but of course Tyler's contemporaries could not be sure how these might be interpreted.³⁴ By August 6, Tappan was writing in his confidential journal that it was generally understood that Tyler would veto the bank bill and that he had taken great pains to show Tyler that if he should veto it, the Democrats would sustain him against Clay. Uncertainty still existed, however, and on August 9, Tappan stated that he encountered no one of any party who had confidence in the President's honesty.³⁵ By Friday, August 13, a committee of Ohio representatives with one or two members of the Senate called on Tyler to urge him to sign the bill. He again acknowledged his perplexity but stated that he felt that he must administer a veto.³⁶ On the

³³ P. C. Gallagher to McLean, Dec. 12, 1840; J. G. Miller to *id.*, Aug. 25, 1841, McLean MSS.

³⁴ Tappan to Edwin M. Stanton, June 7, 1841, J. K. Wright MSS.

³⁵ MS. Journal, Nov. 28, 1839-Feb. 24, 1844, *ibid.*

³⁶ G. R. Poage, *Henry Clay and the Whig Party* (Chapel Hill, N. C., 1936), 71.

same day Tappan wrote to Edwin Stanton: "We do not get the veto yet tho' its coming is certain. The expectation on both sides is that there will be a general blow up. *An entire change in the cabinet* seems inevitable. We *hope* to get Gov. Shannon a place on it."³⁷

By Saturday, August 14, even the most optimistic friends of the bank bill were in despair, but on Sunday, Senator William Allen and Representative William Medill of Ohio were among those who insisted that Tappan and Senator Levi Woodbury of New Hampshire should call at the White House to talk over the veto with the President. They did so, in company with Senator Reuel Williams of Maine, and took tea with him. The President commented that he had been much disturbed by committees visiting him regarding the bank question, and finally Tappan observed to him that "Statesmen act always on their own deliberate judgment and not upon the exhortation of friends or threats of enemy," to which precept Tyler readily assented.³⁸ The next day Tyler vetoed the bank bill, much to the satisfaction of the Ohio Democrats. The Nationalist Whigs, however, brought forth a proposal for a fiscal corporation, which they hoped would meet the constitutional objections of Tyler. McLean of Ohio feared, however, that this was being done "without a friendly understanding with the President."³⁹ During the latter part of August, when the fiscal corporation was being hotly discussed, Tappan twice called upon Tyler in the White House and on the 28th, heard Tyler speak with contempt of this new bank bill, declaring that the more ridiculous it became the easier it would be to administer a veto.⁴⁰ Tappan believed that Tyler wished the cabinet to resign but could not very well turn them out. The Ohio Senator wrote, "I think that go they must but how soon I cannot say."⁴¹ Under such circum-

³⁷ From U. S. Senate Chamber, Aug. 13, 1841, J. K. Wright MSS.

³⁸ MS. Journal, *ibid.*

³⁹ McLean to Duff Green, Sept. 6, 1841, McLean MSS.

⁴⁰ MS. Journal, J. K. Wright MSS.

⁴¹ Tappan to Stanton, U. S. Sen. Chamber, Aug. 30, 1841, *ibid.*

stances, Ewing held a conference with two Ohio Whig congressmen, Patrick G. Goode and Samuel Stokely, and the well-known Alfred Kelley, who agreed that if Tyler vetoed the new fiscal bill (or even a distribution bill) the cabinet should remain until dismissed, for resignations would be, in reality, desertions of the posts to which Harrison and the Nation had appointed them.⁴² The cabinet drifted rapidly toward dissolution, however, and after Tyler vetoed the fiscal corporation on September 9, all the cabinet members except Webster resigned. Ewing wrote at length to Tyler suggesting that the President had refused to approve legislation which he had previously sanctioned in private conferences.

Thus, the Whig Party was practically disrupted. Ohio Whigs had generally followed Clay's leadership, and by July the President had definitely lost the support of the party in Ohio. Duff Green, who was on very intimate terms with Tyler, was endeavoring to bring McLean into the reconstructed cabinet and stated that if McLean refused a place one might be offered to Corwin.⁴³ On the day that Ewing and his colleagues resigned Stokely interviewed Tyler in McLean's behalf and was requested to use his influence to obtain McLean's acceptance of a cabinet position. Tyler himself issued an appointment of McLean as secretary of war, and it was confirmed by the Senate. Tyler and Webster both urged him seriously to consider acceptance, though Webster feared that he ought not be spared from the Supreme bench. On September 17, however, McLean who already held a lifetime Federal judicial position, expressed regret that he was "obliged to decline the high trust so unexpectedly tendered" to him.⁴⁴

Tyler apparently hoped to hold the support of some of the moderate Whigs and to win the favor of some of the antibank Democrats. With the first group he met little success and among the latter he found that to be antibank did not mean to be pro-Tyler.

⁴² Thomas Ewing, "Diary," *American Historical Review* (New York), XVIII (1912), 107.

⁴³ Green to McLean, Washington, Aug. 26, 1841, McLean MSS.

⁴⁴ McLean to John Tyler, Sept. 17, 1841, McLean MSS.

The ardent antibank Tappan of Ohio was among those who called upon the President on the night of the day on which the veto message had been issued. Tyler inquired of him whether the veto had been "flat footed" enough for him and evinced pleasure when Tappan expressed a belief that it was the right thing. But, privately Tappan was rejoicing not only that the bank was "dead and damned" but that Whiggery was being put down.⁴⁵ At about the same time, those Whig members of Congress still remaining in Washington, held an indignation meeting and issued a manifesto to the people of the country. This denounced Tyler for executive usurpation and for an endeavor to create a new party alignment. Jeremiah Morrow of Lebanon (who had replaced Corwin) and Samson Mason of Springfield were among those who played an important part in this caucus whose action was warmly supported by practically all Ohio Whigs except a few State-rights men.⁴⁶

Of course, some Whigs hoped to secure favors from the Tyler régime. Among these was James Wilson who made more than one trip to Washington and received the desired printing contracts for his Steubenville paper as well as "some intimations of further benefits." Since most Ohio Whigs openly disagreed with Tyler, some of them, rather jealous of what Wilson had received, became "warm in their suspicions" of his political connections, and the *Ohio State Journal* undertook to haul him "over the coals" on a charge of Tylerism. For a while Wilson maintained silence or merely intimated that he supported Tyler's position, but at length he replied to the *Journal* in a long article in which he definitely defended Tyler and attacked the Whig leadership in Congress. This, according to the Steubenville Democrat, Edwin M. Stanton, led to an anti-Tyler Whig meeting in that city which offered resolutions "filled with gall and bitterness towards Tyler" and frightened Wilson so that he strongly endorsed Clay's leadership.⁴⁷

In the meantime, the banking question had been revived with

⁴⁵ Tappan to Stanton, Sept. 10, 1841, J. K. Wright MSS.

⁴⁶ Holt, *Party Politics in Ohio*, 166.

⁴⁷ Stanton to Tappan, July 17, 1842, J. K. Wright MSS.

intense feeling in Ohio. Such drastic reformers as Moses Dawson of the *Cincinnati Advertiser*, Samuel Medary of the *Ohio Statesman*, and John Brough from Lancaster (a joint editor of the *Cincinnati Enquirer*) thought the views of Shannon, John A. Bryan of the Columbus *Ohio State Bulletin*, and other moderates, to be little less than party treason. Among the vociferous antibank men in the legislature was David Tod, a senator from Warren. Early in 1840 efforts were even made to prevent the reelection to the State Supreme Court of Reuben Wood of Cleveland, but when the judicial candidates were interrogated as to their views on banking and the currency, Wood responded in a way wholly satisfactory to the majority of the Democrats. He declared the United States Bank unconstitutional and favored an independent treasury; he did not consider a bank charter a contract; he held that grants to corporations by the legislature were from their very nature subject to legislative control, that a bank charter might be forfeited if its provisions were not carried out, and that a State law prohibited the issuing of post-notes, hence their issuance was unconstitutional. Shannon, Thomas Hamer and George H. Flood worked strongly in Wood's favor (Wood had favored a bank for which Flood was the attorney). Hence, Wood was reelected, a number of antibank Democrats casting blank ballots in protest.⁴⁸ At the same time, most of the members of the Ohio Democratic congressional delegation represented the radical financial views of the extreme bank reformers. Tappan, in the first session of the Congress in which he took his seat, December, 1839, opposed the regranting of charters to banks in the District of Columbia except with drastic amendments which included the publication in the newspapers of the names of all bank stockholders, a prohibition of all bank-notes under \$20, and a redemption of bank-notes in specie. Tappan's proposals were tabled, but the Ohio senator renewed his efforts at the next session of Congress. Both Tappan and Allen opposed

⁴⁸ Tappan to Stanton, Jan. 4, 1840, *ibid.*; *id.* to *id.*, Jan. 9, 1840, *ibid.*; Stanton to Tappan, Jan. 14, 1839 [1840], Stanton MSS.; Reuben Wood to David Tod, Jan. 7, 1840, *ibid.*

other measures favorable to the banking interests.⁴⁹ Tappan wrote to his friend Stanton, "In these times when Governors of states and state legislatures are daily bought in the market by these companies of swindlers it behooves us to be on the alert."⁵⁰ In the Ohio legislature, after Wood's reelection, a more moderate tone was exhibited toward bank reform. Stanton bewailed that "sympathy for corporate and other abuses and the fear of them is at the same time rapidly increasing,"⁵¹ and he decided to serve as a "lookout" to bring the transgressions of banking institutions to the attention of the commissioners.⁵² When the bank commissioners reported in 1840, they emphasized the necessity of preventing out-of-State bank-notes from flooding Ohio in unregulated fashion and called attention to the paper currency issued by such firms as the Maumee Insurance Company and the Ohio Railroad Company, issues over which the commissioners had no control, except as the currency was used by authorized banks.

The Ohio Democrats in renominating Shannon in 1840, had reaffirmed their advocacy of bank reform, while the Whigs, with Corwin as their candidate for the governorship had cautiously endorsed a "safe and uniform currency," serviceable alike to the office-holder and the people, and confined within proper "constitutional limits." The State campaign of that year was, of course, largely subordinated to the hilarious hullabaloo associated with the advocacy of "Tippecanoe and Tyler too." The Democratic Party in the State was obviously divided on money questions. Some definitely preferred the Locofoco ideas of Van Buren, who told Allen and Tappan on March 27, that he believed that before long the conservative Shannon would be left in "utter insignificance."⁵³ Antibank men, in general, felt as Tappan did when he wrote:

"I think we must run Shannon, that he is politically damned I

⁴⁹ John Jacob Harstine, "Senatorial Career of Benjamin Tappan," M. A. thesis, Ohio State University, 1939.

⁵⁰ Tappan to Stanton, Washington, Feb. 8, 1840, J. K. Wright MSS.

⁵¹ Stanton to Tappan, Columbus, Jan. 14, 1839 [1840], Stanton MSS.

⁵² *Id.* to W. L. Hatch, Steubenville, Jan. 27, 1840, *ibid.*

⁵³ MS. Journal, J. K. Wright MSS.

have no doubt, but as he is nominated he must be supported. I shall say to all . . . the office of Gov. of Ohio is of very little consequence, and Shannon is as good as the average. He cannot *do* anything and what he *says* if wise will have weight if unwise none at all. We had better vote the whole ticket, but Mr. Allen and I do not intend to *say* anything about Shannon if we can help it, if he goes *in* well, if not well."⁵⁴ On the other hand, some Democrats, *e.g.*, Hamer and Bryan, definitely preferred the Shannon position. This factionalism hurt the Democrats. The Whigs charged that Samuel Medary (Democrat), State printer, had been extravagantly compensated for his services; and that bank reform had failed to improve the currency situation in the State.

Although the number of Democratic votes cast in Ohio was the greatest in its history up to that time, Shannon lost the governorship; and his party, while retaining control of the State Senate, due to the fact that only half of the senators were elected annually, faced the prospect of a substantial Whig majority in the House.⁵⁵

The Democratic legislators once again chose William McLaughlin of Richland County as speaker of the Senate, while the Whig majority in the House named Seabury Ford of Geauga County as their speaker. Since control of the legislature was divided, no new program regarding banks could be carried. Governor Thomas Corwin, in his annual message to the legislature at the time of his accession to office in December, emphasized the desirability of a permanent system of banking and proposed two plans: (1) a State bank having branches in the chief cities; (2) a recharter of the soundest of the existing chartered banks. He advocated limiting the dividends which might accrue to stockholders and a restriction on the note issues of banking institutions. In January, 1841, a bank bill was submitted to the House but was not approved by the Whig majority. The party was divided as to the merits of the New York safety fund system, which required a deposit by each bank to a state-administered fund. Most Whigs favored this plan, with

⁵⁴ Tappan to Stanton, U. S. Senate, Feb. 20, 1840, *ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Ohio State Journal*, Nov. 24, 1840.

somewhat larger specie requirements than New York demanded, but the Democrats presented their old idea of individual liability of stockholders and directors as an additional safeguard. Many Whigs felt that such liability would stifle investment in banking capital, except on the part of the very wealthy. In the House such Democratic politicians as Charles Brough of Lancaster and Thomas W. Bartley of Mansfield thwarted the Whig proposals, which in any case had no chance in the Democratic upper house. But, it became apparent that the Democrats could not continue indefinitely to obstruct the passage of banking legislation, and a spirit of compromise invaded the ranks of both parties.⁵⁶

In the meantime, the Whigs throughout the Nation were realizing that their wide-spread victory of 1840 had placed them in a position of responsibility and that their failure to revive prosperity was producing disillusionment with their leadership. The division in the party between the Tyler and Clay men, moreover, was a disrupting factor. The fact that the specie in Ohio banks had decreased from \$1,752,000 in 1840 to \$827,000 in 1842 did not seem to recommend the Whigs as directors of financial policy. Many banks were failing. Edwin Stanton wrote in February, 1841, that about six State banks were "expected every day to burst. A merry time we are likely to have for the next four years."⁵⁷

In the Ohio elections of 1841, the Democrats won control of both houses of the legislature. The jubilant party members held their usual Jackson Day State Convention in January, 1842, and exhibited an aggressive spirit of Locofocoism. A number of banks applied for new charters. These were rejected, and after a bitter fight the Democrats secured the repeal of the charter of the German Bank of Wooster, which had gone into bankruptcy in September, 1841. Even some conservative Democrats felt that the State debt might be repudiated under the pressure of existing economic difficulties and joined the Whigs to defeat a House resolution that the part of the State debt which had been "arrogantly

⁵⁶ Holt, *Party Politics in Ohio*, 80-1.

⁵⁷ Stanton to Tappan, Steubenville, Feb. 6, 1841, Stanton MSS.

and unlawfully pledged to certain corporations" of the State should be disavowed.⁵⁸ The investing class in the State was much perturbed. Judge Gustavus Swan wrote on January 13, 1842, to Alfred Kelley, then on State business in New York, that the course of the legislature in combination with general conditions was "producing a universal panic in the mind of the community, the end of which" could not be foreseen.⁵⁹ Certainly, developments at Cincinnati at that time were not reassuring. When the Miami Exporting Bank suspended payments and closed its doors, causing its notes to be refused by the public, along with the notes of the Cincinnati Bank, a run on the latter institution developed. The Cincinnati Bank in turn suspended payments, to the anger of the populace. A riot followed, during the course of which the furnishings and other property of the Cincinnati Bank were torn up or scattered in the street, the Exchange Bank was looted, and \$224,000 was taken from the Miami Bank's vaults.

In January, 1842, the Democrats in their regular annual State convention again nominated Shannon for governor and adopted resolutions calling upon the legislature to compel specie payments and to take care to restrict the privileges of corporations. To allay the fears of conservatives, however, another resolution asserted that it was the duty of the State "to make adequate provisions to fulfill their engagements." In February, the Whigs renominated Corwin and denounced the Democrats for the collapse of financial confidence and the suspension of specie payments.⁶⁰

In the meantime, the Locofoco Democrats were securing the passage of two Ohio laws relating to currency and the banks. On February 18, it was provided that the charters and franchises of all banks which did not redeem their notes should be void, and that the president, directors, and stockholders of such banks should be liable for such refusal to redeem the notes. On March 7, a general banking law, the first in the State's history and one which

⁵⁸ Holt, *Party Politics in Ohio*, 82-7.

⁵⁹ J. L. Bates, *Alfred Kelley* (Columbus, 1888), 117.

⁶⁰ Holt, *Party Politics in Ohio*, 88-9.

was supposed to be the basis for all later bank incorporations, was passed. It was called the Latham Act after its sponsor Bela Latham. This provided that banks could begin operations only after the capital stock had been paid in with specie; that dividends must be paid only from bank profits; that a director or stockholder could be indebted to a bank only to the extent of half of the capital owned by him; that stockholders and officers were to be liable for losses to note holders; and that a safety fund must be established. Another law restricted the issuing of paper money to banking institutions.

As the weeks went by, complaint was made that the new legislation had not secured specie payment and that Indiana notes were circulating in place of the Ohio ones.⁶¹ The Whigs, moreover, asserted that the new restrictions were so extreme as to eliminate the creation of new banks. To show the association of their political opponents with radicalism, some Whigs pointed to the sympathy of the Ohio Democrats for the Dorrites, followers of Thomas Dorr, who were engaged in a popular revolution for the extension of the franchise in Rhode Island. Indeed, Democrats in Ohio had a sincere interest in the success of the movement, and Tappan declared: "It will not avail to stop the people. You may rely on it they will sustain their new organization."⁶² As events were to prove, for a time the popular movement was thwarted, and Dorr was thrown into prison, but by 1845 the people attained their principal objectives.

In December, 1842, there were twenty-three specie-paying banks in Ohio with a circulation of \$1,912,254 and specie to the amount of \$894,561. The charters of thirteen of these banks would expire, January 1, 1843, and the charters of two others on January 1, 1844.⁶³ To thoughtful persons, it seemed that if the banks whose charters had run their course did not reincorporate under the

⁶¹ *Niles' Register* (Baltimore, Md.), LXII (1842), 80.

⁶² Tappan to Stanton, Washington, May 5, 1842, J. K. Wright MSS.

⁶³ C. C. Huntington, "History of Banking and Currency in Ohio before the Civil War," *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, XXIV, 408.

Latham Act of 1842, only a small number of banks would be left in Ohio, and the capital of the liquidating banks would, to a large extent, be withdrawn from the State. Ominous predictions were made as to the effect of such developments upon the economic life of the people, and Whig leaders pointed to Democratic responsibility. These problems of private enterprise were made more serious by the impaired status of the State's credit. Taxes were burdensome, and the increasing debt made it necessary for the fund commissioners in 1842 to sell \$1,300,000 of State bonds at a discount of 33.6%. To meet the repayment of a temporary loan of \$400,000 secured in 1841, it became necessary, moreover, to issue new State obligations of \$667,063 in 1842. This meant a discount of 33.4% on the transaction. All of the securities issued in 1842 were redeemable in 1860 and bore six per cent. interest. The legislation which sanctioned the refunding of the temporary loan, suspended all canal work except on the Wabash and Erie route and on those other routes already under contract.⁶⁴

Banking and monetary questions under the circumstances were again issues in the Ohio elections of 1842. Among the Democrats the Locofocos led by Samuel Medary and John Brough, the State auditor, seemed in the ascendancy, but Thomas L. Hamer openly defied their leadership and advocated less drastic banking legislation than that embodied in the Latham Act. As a matter of fact, no banks were incorporated under this law. The Democrats explained the fact as a result of a conspiracy among the Whig bankers, while others contended that the terms of the law were unfavorable to prudent investment.

The State elections of 1842 were favorable to the Democrats in Ohio as in general throughout the Union. This was in spite of the lack of harmony within the State organization. In the next Senate there would be twenty Democrats and fourteen Whigs; in the next House forty Democrats and thirty-two Whigs. Shannon won another term as governor over Corwin, the Whig incumbent. Shan-

⁶⁴ E. L. Bogart, *Internal Improvements and State Debt in Ohio* (New York, 1924) 174-7.

non was especially glad of the return to office for he badly needed the position. After his defeat for reelection in 1840, an endeavor had been made by Tappan to get Van Buren to appoint him *chargé d'affaires* to Venezuela, but the President had deemed it unwise to do so at so late a time in his Administration.⁶⁵

The Whig defeat in Ohio in 1842 was attributed to various causes: abolitionism, Tylerism, superior organization among the Democrats, the immigrant vote, and the lethargy of Whig leaders. Some Democrats attributed the result in part to the tactics employed by the Whig legislators during the summer of 1842. Earlier in the year Congress had passed legislation making the single member district plan obligatory in apportioning representatives to Congress. In endeavoring to conform to the new Federal statute, the Ohio legislature, in a special session, sought to redistrict the State but in a manner which the Whig minority deemed to be a brazen effort at gerrymandering. To prevent the passage of the bill by the Democratic majority, Whig members of both houses resigned so as to produce the lack of a quorum and the automatic failure of the proposal. With an angry feeling of frustration, Democratic newspapers had denounced the resigned Whig legislators as "absquatulators."⁶⁶

Doubtless the banking question had also redounded to the advantage of the Democrats, for the Latham Act seemed popular with Ohioans who felt that the banks had contributed to the hard times of the preceding five years. Up to this time the banks of Ohio had been incorporated by special acts of the legislature, which granted charters for specified terms of years; and note issues had been based on the general assets of the banks. The result of the issuing of special charters had been a lack of uniformity among the banks, a lack of any satisfactory procedure for the redemption of notes, and a stretching of credit facilities beyond reasonable limits. Ohioans had realized that something in the way of bank reform was necessary, and in 1842 they had tried drastic regulation as

⁶⁵ Entry for Dec. 21, 1840, MS. Journal, J. K. Wright MSS.

⁶⁶ Holt, *Party Politics in Ohio*, 97-100, 91-4.

a means of accomplishing it.⁶⁷ Whether such highly restrictive legislation was actually too severe became an important political question.

Corwin in his last message to the legislature in December, 1842, warned of the effects that would follow the closing of over half the banks in the State on January 1, but the incoming governor, Shannon, gave no encouragement to those who wished the existing banks to be continued, and thirteen banks went out of business with the New-year. Benjamin F. Wade, then in the Ohio Senate, wrote that nothing was being done in the legislature early in January because of the division between the ultra hard money men and the soft money men within the Democratic Party.⁶⁸ Neither Shannon nor the bank commissioners, however, were publicly in favor of a hard money currency, and the principal question in 1843 seemed to be what concessions could be made to the conservative Democrats without striking away fundamental provisions of the Latham Act. At length, the Latham Act was amended in February in regard to the individual liability of bank stockholders so as to protect those directors who desired to abide by the law but might be outvoted by a majority; but the Whigs denounced the alteration as merely another "humbug" which did not change essentially the difficulty of securing adequate banking capital for the State.⁶⁹

The banking question was not to be settled definitely in Ohio in 1843. According to Wade, there was "more excitement among the people" of the State than had ever been known before on the currency question, and *Niles' Register* (Baltimore, Md.) reported that the agitation was greater in Ohio than in any other State.⁷⁰ The question was fought over again in the fall elections of 1843. In the meantime, however, the general situation in the State had improved in at least one respect. In January, Wade had written that the State was "in a deplorable condition," that it would not be able to meet its interest charges in July, and that in confidence

⁶⁷ Huntington, "History of Banking," 408-9.

⁶⁸ Benjamin F. Wade to Giddings, Columbus, Jan. 2, 1843, Giddings MSS.

⁶⁹ Holt, *Party Politics in Ohio*, 102-3.

⁷⁰ *Niles' Register*, LXV (1843), 243.

he could say that State bankruptcy was "inevitable."⁷¹ Indeed, when the commissioners of the canal fund went to New York to obtain further loans, they found the State securities listed at only 70. Certain other western states had defaulted in their interest payments, and this had reflected unfavorably upon the credit of Ohio. The canal commissioners, therefore, drew up a comprehensive statement to demonstrate the essential soundness of the State's finances. The interest rate on the new loan was raised to seven per cent., and the surplus revenue of 1837 (then in the hands of county fund commissioners) was specifically pledged for the redemption of the new bonds in 1851. In this way, loans totaling \$1,500,000 had been obtained at par by September, and by the end of the year the State auditor could report that the State's credit was in much better condition than it had been a year previous, in spite of the additions which had been made to the debt. In 1844, further loans, amounting to \$210,000 were obtained. That year marked a high point in the whole history of the State in regard to funded indebtedness (\$17,917,000).⁷² Fundamentally, the crisis in the State's finances had been passed in the opening months of 1842, when Alfred Kelley, appreciating the seriousness of the situation, had played a dominant role in convincing Ohio legislators of the necessity of refunding the temporary loan, of suspending canal projects (except on the Wabash and Erie route), and of declaring its intention to meet its obligations to its creditors. There were intimate friends of Kelley who believed that he had thus saved the State from a policy of "repudiation" and that, in spite of his many noteworthy services to Ohio, this was his greatest contribution to its welfare.⁷³

A matter of much interest to Ohioans was the permanent location of the State capital and the erection of a new Capitol building. Columbus had become the capital in October, 1816, under an agreement that it should remain such until May 1, 1840, and so

⁷¹ Wade to Giddings, Columbus, Jan. 2, 1843, Giddings MSS.

⁷² Bogart, *Internal Improvements*, 177, 243.

⁷³ Bates, *Alfred Kelley*, 112-28.

long thereafter as the legislature did not provide otherwise.⁷⁴ After twenty years of service the Capitol buildings seemed outmoded, and in January, 1838, the legislature sanctioned the appointment of three commissioners to advertise for plans for a new State-house. The citizens of Columbus rejoiced at such enhanced prospects for the community, and the proprietor of the National Hotel, on the site of the present Neil House, "had the candles in his front windows so arranged as to form letters and spell New State House." The commissioners were named, and a contract was awarded to William S. Sullivant for limestone from his quarry near the city. Plans were obtained for the structure; excavation got under way in the spring of 1839; and on July 4, of that year, the cornerstone was laid with elaborate ceremony. During the legislative session of 1839-40, however, Samuel Medary, editor of the *Columbus Ohio Statesman* and State printer, was accused of appropriating to his own use certain unused paper for which the State paid. Medary's conduct, upon investigation, was found not to be irregular, but his party associates in turn brought a demand for the expulsion of William B. Lloyd, a Whig legislator from Cuyahoga County, on the ground that he had secretly altered certain accounts. Lloyd was found guilty but was not expelled. Thereupon, a group of Columbus citizens issued a public statement expressing confidence in Lloyd's integrity. This action irritated legislators who had voted against Lloyd and who resented the interference of Columbus people, and a bill was presented in the House for the repeal of the law of 1838 providing for the erection of the new State-house. This passed both houses as did a resolution for a joint committee to inquire into the expediency of moving the seat of government from Columbus. Much discussion developed, and late in 1842 citizens of Newark offered inducements for the removal of the capital to that place. But on March 6, 1843, the House decisively rejected resolutions calling upon the governor to proclaim the necessity of choosing a new site for the capital.

⁷⁴ Elmer E. Noyes, "The Selection of a Site for the Permanent Location of Ohio's Capital," M. A. thesis, Ohio State University, 1940, 27.

Thereafter, the issue was never revived.⁷⁵ Work on the new Capitol building was carried on with the use of convict labor from 1846 to 1852, when the burning of the old building necessitated more expeditious progress.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 40-50.

⁷⁶ A. E. Lee, *History of the City of Columbus* (New York, 1892), II, 565-76.

Persisting Banking Problems

DURING the State campaign of 1843 the Whigs continued to attack the rigid bank legislation which the Democrats had sponsored, and represented their own party as the preserver of law and order and the enemy of repudiation. The election indicated substantial gains for the Whigs who won control of the House by a margin of six votes. Although the Democrats continued in control of the Senate, their majority was only four votes, and two of these were representative of independent Democrats who had been elected in opposition to the radical Locofocos. Thus, on a joint ballot of both houses, the Whigs could secure the election of State officers of their own party, but the Democrats would be able to obstruct Whig banking proposals if the independents of their party would follow the lead of the majority.

Some Whigs urged their party leaders to present a new banking measure, letting the responsibility for defeat fall on the Democrats, if members of that party should scuttle it in the Senate. As a matter of fact, however, there were Democrats in the Senate whose views on banking were not dissimilar to those advocated by the Whigs; and party discipline was further weakened under the strain of a factional struggle for control of the State's delegation to the national convention of 1844. Wilson Shannon had been elected in 1842 with far from enthusiastic support on the part of many Democrats; and he was now regarded as an ally of the Tylerites. Indeed, it is not unlikely that an agreement had been reached with Tyler's State-rights friends in Ohio during the summer of 1842 by which they had supported Shannon for the governorship.

The governor, in his annual message to the legislature in December, 1843, seriously disappointed the advocates of bank reform, as he had done before, in 1839. He proclaimed his confi-

dence in a "well-guarded and well-restricted system of local banks, judiciously distributed in the State, with a fixed amount of capital, adequate to the business wants of the country." Thus, he revealed views not unlike those of the Whigs.¹ The expiration of the charters of the Bank of Geauga and the Commercial Bank of Cincinnati on January 1, 1844, further reduced the banking capital of the State and left but eight authorized banks in Ohio, with a total capital of \$2,304,745. These were in good condition and soundly managed, but their capitalization and circulating notes were inadequate for a State which was the third most populous in the Union and the leading agricultural State in the entire country. During the 1830's, Ohio's population had increased 62%, a rate of increase almost double that of the whole United States, and her economic development had been even more phenomenal. Since the note issues of Ohio banks were not sufficient for the needs of trade, paper notes of dubious value were often used, and in December, 1844, as much as \$7,473,483 in notes issued by banks outside of Ohio were in circulation. At the same time, although the amount of specie in Ohio banks was very low, there was considerable in private hands. In July, 1843, the *Cleveland Herald* inquired, "Would it not be a better policy to have a currency of safe, sound and convertible Ohio paper, than all sorts of trash, good, bad and indifferent, from abroad?"² Early in 1843, a conservative Democrat from Circleville, Edson B. Olds, had introduced a new banking proposal in the legislature. This would have eliminated the Locofoco principle (which the Democrats of Ohio had generally accepted) of individual liability for bank stockholders. The most the Democrats as a whole were willing to accept was a minor amendment to the Latham Act; and antibank newspapers heaped vitriolic abuse upon Olds.³

The message of Shannon had given heart to the conservative Democrats. One of the Locofocos wrote: "Shannon's message has

¹ E. A. Holt, *Party Politics in Ohio, 1840-1850* (Columbus, 1930), 110-2.

² *Cleveland Herald*, July 3, 1843.

³ Holt, *Party Politics in Ohio*, 103-4.

done an incalculable injury. . . . We have several soft Demos. in the Senate who only waited for Shannon to lead off on the currency question to show their hands. Miller of Belmont, partner of Shannon's, Lahm of Stark and one or two others are rotten to the core. . . . Columbus is filled with all the apostates, renegades, Bank hirelings, . . . which are thrown off as the scum of the Democratic party. . . . See the *strange* almost suicidal as I conceive it, invitation to Shannon to a public dinner and a full indorsement of 'his political course'!!! signed by two thirds of the Democratic members of the legislature."⁴ Conservative Democrats endeavored to modify the Latham Act to the extent of exempting the Bank of Wooster from its provisions. Samuel Lahm of Stark County, a State senator who was officially connected with that bank, and three other Democratic senators were persuaded by two directors of the bank, to join with the Whigs in this modification. Fairly severe requirements were provided for the Bank of Wooster, but the firm defense of the Latham Act by the Democratic Party had been broken. This was especially true because the new privileges and conditions were also extended to the Lafayette Bank of Cincinnati and the Bank of Xenia, and before the legislative session was over, to the Bank of Sandusky and the Bank of Norwalk.

The Whigs were not content with these concessions. Late in December, largely as a political manifesto and as a means of widening the gap between the Locofoco and the conservative Democrats, the Whigs had forced through the House a bill for the repeal of the Latham Act (as modified by the Bartley Act) and for the extension of the charters of the Commercial Bank of Cincinnati and the Bank of Geauga. This was not acceptable to the Democratic Senate.⁵ The Whigs then proposed the establishment of a Bank of Ohio with a capital of \$10,000,000 to be divided among various branches by a board of five State commissioners, but this also failed of passage.⁶

⁴ Henry C. Whitman to William Allen, Lancaster, O., Dec. 15, 1843, Allen MSS.

⁵ Holt, *Party Politics in Ohio*, 114-5.

⁶ C. C. Huntington, "History of Banking and Currency in Ohio before the Civil War," *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, XXIV, 420.

One reason for the break in the Democratic position on banking was the bitter fight associated with the State convention of January 8. Conservative Democrats like Shannon, Rufus P. Spalding, George W. Manypenny, William Sawyer, and Samuel Lahm favored Lewis Cass of Michigan for the Presidency instead of the radical Martin Van Buren. Allen G. Thurman of Chillicothe and Edwin Stanton of Steubenville, however, were successful in opposing a proposal favorable to Cass's candidacy in the selection of delegates.⁷ The antibank Van Buren men had clearly strengthened their position, and David Tod, a radical Democrat, was nominated for the governorship on a strong antibank platform. Apparently conservatives among the Democrats hoped to persuade Tod to modify his views on monetary matters, and on January 27 he wrote a letter to the Cuyahoga County Democratic Central Committee admitting that banks were a requisite of the business community, and that he was favorable to the old system with necessary modifications. These modifications, however, were essentially those of the Bartley Act. The Whigs, nevertheless, endeavored to give the impression that Tod had departed from the principles of the Democratic State platform, and Tod himself wrote disappointedly that the letter had brought down on him the denunciations of some of his highly esteemed friends in the State. Senator Benjamin Tappan, always a rather irascible individualist, expressed dissatisfaction with Tod's course, but the Cincinnati *Enquirer* (which under the new editorship of Charles Brough was especially zealous for Van Buren principles) did not feel that Tod had departed from orthodox Democratic standards. Apparently Tod had merely tried to mollify the conservatives without surrendering any essential principle.⁸

Meanwhile, the Whig State Convention had met in Columbus on January 10, with the reform of the State government the battle-cry of the party. Thomas Corwin of Lebanon presided and was

⁷ William Medill to Allen, Columbus, Jan. 11, 1844, Allen MSS.

⁸ David Tod to *id.*, Warren, Mar. 24, 1844, *ibid.*; James J. Farn to *id.*, Cincinnati, Feb. 25, 1844, *ibid.*

eulogized by Henry Stanbery of Lancaster (who later achieved national prominence) as the clear choice of the party; but Corwin had accepted the position of standard-bearer in 1842 when Whig prospects were so low as to make Democratic success a practical certainty, and he apparently felt that he was entitled to the United States senatorship as recompense for his sacrifice. The nomination then went to David Spangler of Coshocton, who was not in attendance at the convention and who quickly declined for personal reasons. This refusal necessitated a second State convention in February, which nominated Mordecai Bartley of Richland County.⁹

Oddly enough, in April the Whig nominee's son, Thomas Welles Bartley, who had been serving as Democratic speaker of the Senate, became acting governor through the resignation of Shannon. The latter had been in close touch with the Tyler men in Ohio, and in November, 1843, he had written a letter to a committee in Cleveland, lauding Tyler. Antibank Democrats looked upon this coalition between the Tylerites and the conservative Democrats as evidence of Shannon's party treason. When Tyler then appointed Shannon minister to Mexico, the antibank men felt that the governor had secured his reward, and one of them wrote to Senator William Allen that he hoped that Shannon's appointment would be confirmed by the Senate, for, "if we can but get rid of him, it will be a time of rejoicing with the best men among us. For if he remains, I do believe it is his settled determination to do us all the harm he can, and such is the opinion of others in whom you have confidence."¹⁰ Shannon's nomination was confirmed by the Senate, and he accordingly resigned as governor.

As a Presidential year, 1844 complicated the State campaign by the contest for control of the National Administration. Yet, the campaign for the governorship was not without interest and some excitement. Matters relating to banking and currency were still of primary importance, in spite of diversions in the form of per-

⁹ Holt, *Party Politics in Ohio*, 117-8.

¹⁰ Burrell B. Taylor to Allen, Columbus, Mar. 18, 1844, Allen MSS.

sonal attacks upon Tod as one who gave support to infidelity by his alleged association with irreligious men and as one who was reputedly lacking in patriotic sentiment especially as far as deference to the flag was concerned. Whigs repeated their old contention, and cited contemporary evidence to prove it, that the Democrats were really bank destroyers rather than bank reformers. In Ohio, lack of enthusiasm for the Polk ticket did not help the candidates for State office, and Tod found that he was too radical for the conservative Democrats and too moderate for the extreme Loco-focos on the banking question.¹¹ As a consequence, Mordecai Bartley was elected governor, and the Whigs gained control of both houses of the legislature. Tod was destined to wait until the fateful Civil War years for his term as governor. Yet, even in 1844, the vote was close, Tod receiving 145,062 votes to 146,333 for Bartley. With the organization of the legislature in December, the speakerships of the upper and lower houses went to David Chambers of Muskingum County and John M. Gallagher of Clark County, respectively.

The new governor was then sixty-one years of age. A native of Pennsylvania, he had settled as a young man in Ohio and had served in the War of 1812 under William Henry Harrison. At the conclusion of the war he had moved to the frontier, settling near Mansfield in Richland County. He had prospered as a farmer and merchant in Mansfield, and had served in the State Senate and in the national House of Representatives (1823-1831) as a steadfast supporter of John Quincy Adams and Henry Clay.¹² He was a modest, unassuming man, who in his first message to the legislature outlined only the general needs of a State banking system, leaving the specific details to the party leaders in the two houses. In the State Senate, there sat a man of very different personality, fifty-five year old Alfred Kelley, a Connecticut Yankee who had located in Cleveland in 1810 and who had had a major part in the

¹¹ Holt, *Party Politics in Ohio*, 121-2.

¹² *Dictionary of American Biography*, ed. by Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone (New York, 1928-1937), II, 16-7.



34. ALFRED KELLEY HOME, EAST BROAD STREET, COLUMBUS
Erected in 1836; one of the finest of residences in Ohio before 1850; now
the St. Joseph Cathedral Parish School, hence the cross, and the lettered
sign above the pillars. Courtesy of Frank J. Roos, Jr.

development of Ohio's canal system. He had served on the canal commission beginning in 1822 and then from 1825 to 1834 and from 1841 to 1843. In 1830 he had moved to Columbus, where his home was a social and political center. Dignified and commanding in appearance, with perhaps (according to Clay) "too much cast-iron in his composition to be popular," he knew how to utilize Whig control of both houses of the legislature to secure such legislation as the party leaders desired.

Accordingly, on January 7, 1845, he introduced a proposal which became known as the Kelley bank bill. In the accompanying report was the statement: "The committee entertain no doubt that a very large majority of the people of the state anxiously desire the enactment by the present General Assembly, of some law authorizing the establishment of banks which will furnish them with a safe and convenient currency, afford reasonable facilities for obtaining money to meet the wants of commercial and manufacturing operations, and at the same time hold out proper inducements to those who have money to invest in banking institutions." The framers of the bill hoped to provide a system by which, in certain sections of the State, where local capitalists could not readily provide the funds for the establishment of banks, out-of-State capitalists might be induced to furnish the capital under proper restrictions for the safety of local depositors. At the same time the framers hoped to create a plan by which local investors in some parts of Ohio would enter the field of banking investment.¹³ Hence, the Kelley bill "to incorporate the State Bank of Ohio and other banking companies," provided that, in addition to the old individually chartered banks, two new types might be set up, the State Bank of Ohio, and independent banks. The capital of all new banks (not including those already organized under previous laws) was not to exceed \$6,150,000. The banks, moreover, were to be distributed throughout the State on a basis of approximate needs, the State being divided into twelve districts for this purpose. Within the districts, Hamilton County was to be permitted four

¹³ J. L. Bates, *Alfred Kelley, His Life and Work* (Columbus, 1888), 129ff.

new banks, Cuyahoga six, Franklin three, Ross two, Muskingum two, Jefferson two, Summit three, Lucas two, Miami two, Montgomery two, and no other county more than one.

A Board of Bank Commissioners was to have the duty of passing on all applications for new banks. The maximum capital stock for any bank was to be \$500,000, with \$100,000 as the minimum for each branch of the State Bank and \$50,000 for each independent bank. The State Bank could come into existence when seven branches had been established and each had designated its representative to the Board of Control, which was to meet in Columbus and exercise general supervision over the member banks. No central bank was to function as a part of the State Bank system. The wide-spread demand for limitation of bank-notes was to be met: (1) by a requirement that they must be redeemed in specie or in United States currency, failure to do so being considered evidence of insolvency; (2) by a restriction of the amount issued to a fixed proportion of its capital.¹⁴ Each branch, moreover, had to turn over to the Board of Control ten per cent. of its notes as a safety fund, which could be invested in State or United States stock or in first mortgage real estate bonds, each branch to receive its share of the interest on such investments.

The chief difference between the branches of the proposed State Bank and the independent banks was in the way in which provision was to be made to insure the soundness of the institution. Each independent bank was to be required to deposit stock of Ohio or of the United States with the State treasurer to the amount of its capital stock, and notes were to be issued under the supervision of that State official. In neither type of bank did the Whigs adopt the Democratic doctrine of individual liability of stockholders. Limited collective liability, which varied in detail as applied to the two types of banks, was provided. All banks created under the law might function until May 1, 1866, but any branch of

¹⁴ Up to \$100,000 capital, notes equal to twice the capital were permitted. The proportion decreased for additional capitalization until only three-fourths the equivalent of the capital could be issued in notes when the capitalization exceeded \$300,000.

the State Bank might be closed at any time with the consent of the Board of Control. Each bank was to be obligated to maintain at all times a specie reserve equal to thirty per cent. of its outstanding notes. Dividends were to be based only on net profits, and six per cent. of such dividends were to be turned over to the State. A maximum interest rate of six per cent. on loans was provided, as well as a restriction on the amount which could be loaned to any one individual or business firm. The Kelley Act was signed by officers of the legislature on February 24, 1845. The new law specifically repealed the Latham Act of March 7, 1842, and the Bartley Act of February 21, 1843. It became the basic law for the banking system of Ohio until the Civil War period brought forth the national Banking Act of 1863 under which many banks in Ohio were chartered.¹⁵

The Democrats to a large extent denounced the law, and David T. Disney in the State Senate and Charles Reemelin in the House (both from Cincinnati) at once served notice that they would introduce bills to repeal the new legislation.¹⁶ At the same time some question arose as to whether banking capital would find the terms of the new law liberal enough for prudent investment. By July, however, the seven branch banks necessary for the creation of the State Bank had been organized, and eight independent banks had been set up under the terms of the Kelley Act; and by December, Governor Mordecai Bartley in his message to the legislature could accurately record: "Thus far the system has proved to be equal to the anticipations of its friends, and the necessities of the people of the State." At the same time reviving business and increasing prosperity seemed to accompany expanding banking facilities.

The Locofoco Democrats in Ohio, however, were a determined group, and they made earnest efforts to eliminate the influence of the conservative element in the party. Led by H. C. Whitman of Lancaster, Samuel Medary of the Columbus *Ohio Statesman*, and Thomas W. Bartley, they endeavored to utilize the patronage of

¹⁵ Huntington, "Banking and Currency," 421ff.

¹⁶ Cleveland *Herald*, Feb. 24, 1845.

the new Democratic Administration of President James K. Polk to serve their ends. They sought the assistance of Allen, then chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate, and considerable success attended their efforts. Shannon, a leading conservative Democrat, had proved to be a rather ineffective minister to Mexico, and was forced to retire from the position in March, 1845. He coveted an appointment as Federal district attorney, but Allen's influence aided the radical Democrats in securing the appointment for Thomas W. Bartley. Other concessions were made to the radicals, including the withdrawal of Federal funds from the German Bank of Wooster.¹⁷ In the meantime, the State campaign of 1845 got under way. The Democratic Party held a convention in Columbus, July 4, supposedly to secure the better organization of the party. Dominated by the antibank men, it indicated that if successful at the polls, it would repeal the Kelley Act and reestablish legislation of the type of the Latham Law.

At the same time there was much discussion of the problem of taxation. Alfred Kelley, as a member of the State Senate had interested himself in this question and had secured the adoption of a resolution requesting the State auditor to furnish necessary data for evaluating the revenue system of Ohio.¹⁸ As a matter of fact, gross inadequacies existed in the tax system of Ohio, for it not only failed to produce sufficient revenues but included many inequalities. The taxing power was not being used for the single purpose of raising revenue but also for the encouragement or the hindrance of certain interests. Lands highly developed were still taxed as if in an uncultivated state, in order to encourage the agricultural interests; tools and machinery were exempted as a means of favoring the mechanics and manufacturers of Ohio; banks were taxed only on their profits as an inducement to foreign capital; and charitable and educational institutions were exempted for obvious reasons. The result was that the assessed value of property on the tax duplicate represented only a relatively small part of the

¹⁷ Holt, *Party Politics in Ohio*, 127-8.

¹⁸ Bates, *Alfred Kelley*, 138ff.

actual wealth of the State, and for ten years after 1836 there were annual deficits. Interest and current expenses had only been met by borrowing, and special taxes on various types of corporations and professions had been very disappointing.

It was obvious that far-reaching revision of the revenue laws of Ohio was imperative. Constructive thinking along this line was stimulated by the report of the Senate committee on February 7, 1845, based on the facts obtained from the State auditor. Two paragraphs from the committee's report suggest something of the urgency of revision: "Much of the personal property which under our present law is exempt from taxation is the most productive property in the State. Money or capital employed in purchasing notes, bonds, and mortgages, in buying and selling money and exchange, in various kinds of traffic, and manufacturing operations, in ships, vessels, and steamboats on the lakes and on the Ohio River, in the furniture of extensive hotels and taverns, stage-coaches, and horses, may be taken as specimens of this class of property; and no good reason can, in the opinion of the committee, be assigned for exempting this property from taxation. Costly furniture, although producing no income, may be considered as indicative of wealth of the owner and his ability to pay taxes; and as a luxury, has ever been considered, by enlightened legislators, a proper object for taxation. Nor is it easy to discover a satisfactory reason for continuing to tax property vested in horses and cattle and permitting that vested in sheep and swine to escape. If it be said that hogs are fattened on the annual products of farms which are taxed, and that therefore the hogs themselves should not be taxed, it may be replied with equal force that cattle and horses are also raised and fed on the yearly products of farms."¹⁹ Public opinion, however, was not prepared for drastic revision, and the only important tax law passed at that session was one of March 13, 1845, "to provide more effectually for a correct and equal assessment of money and capital in trade, for the purpose of Taxation." This endeavored to secure more complete returns for taxation by requir-

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 146.

ing written statements under oath from taxpayers and by defining more carefully money and evidences of debt. It exempted pleasure carriages of less than forty dollars valuation from taxation but placed stage-coaches on the tax duplicate.²⁰

This law had been on the statute books only a few months when the Democratic State Convention of 1845 met in Columbus on July 4. The new Whig tax law was attacked particularly on the grounds that the taxation of banks was not especially provided for and that bank stock was in a preferred position, for the only tax upon it was the six per cent. assessment on dividends, sanctioned by the Kelley Banking Act. In reply, the Whigs stressed the sanctity of charters and contracts, maintaining that any change in the method of taxing banks would be in violation of their charters.

Thus, the bank question was injected, in a somewhat modified form, into the State campaign of 1845. The old controversy between the conservative and Locofoco Democrats continued, with much bitterness over the control of appointments. During the year, Samuel Medary had sold the State party organ, the *Ohio Statesman*, to C. C. Hazewell, a native of Rhode Island. The latter endeavored to maintain a strong antibank position, but lacked the journalistic and political ability of Medary, whose personal leadership was a great loss to the rank and file of the party. At the same time the desire of Tappan to install his son Eli, at the head of a radical Democratic paper in Ohio, made more difficult the task of certain Democratic editors in the State. Tappan reported to Allen information which he had obtained from a correspondent in Boston that Hazewell was known there as "a man of good education and talents but without principle or judgment"; and he endeavored to convince Democratic leaders that the New Lisbon *Ohio Patriot* "was rapidly retrograding in principles" under the editorship of his old friend, Thomas J. Morgan.²¹

²⁰ E. L. Bogart, "Financial History of Ohio," University of Illinois, *Studies in the Social Sciences*, I (Urbana, 1912), 214.

²¹ Benjamin Tappan to Allen, Aug. 12, 1845, Allen MSS.; Thomas J. Morgan to [Tod], New Lisbon, O., Dec. 2, 1845, *ibid.*

In spite of such bickerings within the party, the antibank Democrats were able to hold numerous county and district conventions which vociferously endorsed extreme antibank views. The Whigs upheld the new bank law as necessary for stable business activity. In the Western Reserve, State issues were complicated by sectional questions relating to the annexation of Texas and the problem of slavery. The results were highly favorable to the Whigs, who elected eighteen of their party in the Senate to twelve Democrats, and thirty-eight in the House to twenty-two Democrats. Seabury Ford of Burton was chosen speaker of the Senate and Elias F. Drake, a Xenia railroad capitalist, speaker of the House.

Apparently the elections had indicated that Ohio voters saw substantial merit in the Whig banking policies and were averse to overturning the benefits derived from them. The antibank Democrats, nevertheless, laid plans for obtaining control of the annual State convention which was to meet in Columbus, January 8, 1846. David Tod of Warren once again secured wide-spread support for the governorship, but extreme antibank men, H. C. Whitman and Tappan for example, demanded that he should prove himself satisfactory by coming out "boldly in support" of Locofoco principles.²² Whitman preferred Edwin M. Stanton for the nomination. Conservative Democrats favored Thomas L. Hamer rather than Tod for the governorship, and his nomination would have been regarded as a victory for those favoring Cass for the Presidency. Some conservative Democrats wished to minimize the banking issue which had been long before the public view, but the radicals were adamant in insisting that the question remain the focal point of discussion. Delegates chosen by the county conventions were generally committed to Tod's nomination, and the resolutions adopted in these local groups were almost universally opposed to the Kelley Banking Act. Early in December, 1845, Samuel Medary wrote to Allen: "Tod will evidently be nominated on the 8th of Jany. Convention by acclamation. The *soft* press was doing him a serious injury by misrepresenting the *Ohio Patriot* which it

²² Tappan to Allen, Steubenville, Nov. 30, 1845, *ibid.*

was believed spoke for him, but that paper has put itself right.”²³

Medary was chosen president of the convention, and during the proceedings introduced a letter from Tod that was read in spite of the objections of the conservatives. Whitman and Tappan, the latter “as uncompromising upon hard money as the rock of Gibraltar,” had won their point, for Tod expressed extreme anti-bank views.²⁴ He acknowledged his earlier tolerance for banks when properly restricted, but testified that experience had brought him to oppose all banking systems and to favor a State constitutional convention which would prohibit the “granting of all charters and exclusive privileges.” The nomination of Tod and the adoption of a resolution opposing all paper money and demanding a return “to the constitutional currency of gold and silver” were hailed with jubilation by Locofoco leaders in the State.²⁵ Some conservative Democrats regarded such pronouncements as extreme, and the Whigs condemned them as indicative of a spirit of destruction that was warring against the prosperity of the State. At their State convention early in February the Whigs nominated William Bebb of Butler County for the governorship. Condemning a currency of gold and silver only, they raised the cry of “Wm. Bebb and a Home Currency against David Tod and Pot Metal.”

In the meantime, another issue had become critical, namely, the new Whig tax law of March 2, 1846, piloted through the Senate by Alfred Kelley and through the lower house by former Congressman Benjamin S. Cowen, of St. Clairsville.²⁶ Known as the Kelley Revenue Act of 1846, it provided for a fairly extensive revision of Ohio's taxation system. Much favoritism and injustice were swept away, though some changes had to await the coming of a new State constitution in 1851. The new law specified that “all property, whether real or personal, within this State, and all moneys and credits of persons residing therein, unless exempted, shall be subject to taxation.” No longer would other domestic animals than

²³ Samuel Medary to *id.*, Columbus, Dec. 9, 1845, *ibid.*

²⁴ Matthias Martin to *id.*, Columbus, Jan. 5, 1846, *ibid.*

²⁵ Holt, *Party Politics in Ohio*, 139-41.

²⁶ Bates, *Alfred Kelley*, 170-1.

horses and cattle escape taxation; and watches, pianos, and similar articles supposedly were to be assessed along with carriages. Exemptions though less than formerly, were still very generous and included: cemeteries; schools and religious buildings; the buildings, credits, and money of scientific, literary, or benevolent societies; public property belonging to the State or Nation; lands sold by the United States for five years after sale; county buildings with ten acres of land; county or township buildings for the poor; State stocks; furniture and kindred articles of individuals up to \$100 in value; similar equipment of taverns or boarding houses up to \$200 in value; wearing apparel, food, farming implements, mechanics' tools up to \$150 in value; one cow, eight sheep, and four hogs for each family (unless it was already taxed on property worth over \$100). The special treatment for banks, merchants, manufacturers, and other corporations provided for in the law aroused much heated discussion. Some banks, because of their charters or other legislative enactments, were exempt from the operation of the law of 1845, and a decided lack of uniformity existed in the taxes imposed.²⁷

During the campaign of 1846, therefore, much the same arguments were used against the Whigs as in 1845. Against the Bank Act of 1845 and the new tax law of 1846 the Democrats declared they were "waging a war of extermination." The banks were denounced as "Kelley's swindling shops" and the tax law as a failure. One campaign newspaper was called the *Tax Killer*.²⁸ Obviously the future of these two enactments depended on the results of the election of 1846. Bebb was elected over Tod by a vote of 118,869 to 116,484, with 10,797 votes for Samuel Lewis, the noted educational leader who headed the Liberty Party ticket. The Whigs attained a majority of eight in the lower house, and William P. Cutler of Marietta was subsequently chosen the speaker; but there was a tie for the control of the Senate, and the speakership went to the adroit conservative Democrat, Edson B. Olds of Lancaster.

²⁷ Bogart, "Financial History of Ohio," 216-8, 281.

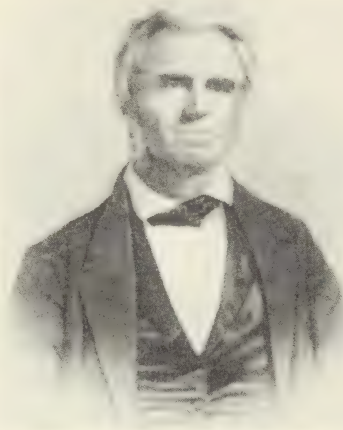
²⁸ Bates, *Alfred Kelley*, 171-2.

The Whigs captured a majority of the Ohio congressional seats.

The new governor was forty-two years of age. His parents, natives of Wales, had settled in the vicinity of North Bend, Hamilton County, when the region was still a wilderness. Hence, the future governor's schooling was practically confined to that received from his parents until a wandering schoolmaster set up a school in the neighborhood, where Bebb was taught English, Latin, and mathematics. Later, while conducting a school of his own he began the study of law, and for fourteen years previous to 1846 he was a successful attorney at Hamilton, Butler County.²⁹

While Bebb was governor, State politics were much perturbed by controversies arising from the conduct of the Mexican War, and the eagerness of business interests for railroad con-

struction. But the Democrats would not permit the attack upon banks and other vested interests to be dropped. Although the Revenue Act of 1846 brought greater revenues to the State treasury than previous legislation, the Democrats continued to denounce it and the Kelley Bank Act of 1845 on every possible occasion. During the legislative session of 1846-47 they demanded that banks be taxed on the same basis as other property and that jewelry and money invested in State stocks be similarly taxed. Accordingly, a bill to this effect was introduced into the Ohio Senate, and although it had no chance of becoming a law, it kept alive the crusading spirit of the Democratic reformers.



35. SAMUEL LEWIS (1799-1854)
Prominent Ohio educator and anti-slavery leader. Courtesy of Ohio State Museum.

²⁹ *Biographical Cyclopaedia and Portrait Gallery of the State of Ohio* (Cincinnati, 1883), I, 92-3.

The State elections of 1847 resulted in a small majority in each house for the Whig Party, and when the legislature convened in December, Charles B. Goddard of Zanesville was chosen speaker of the Senate, with Joseph S. Hawkins of Preble County, the presiding officer of the lower house. Bebb in his annual message asserted that the Whig victory indicated a popular endorsement of the financial measures of the party; but already issues relating to slavery and the Mexican War overshadowed other matters of political concern.³⁰

Sectionalism and the problems of the war were intimately connected with the question of territorial expansion, in which Ohioans exhibited an animated interest. As early as the first year of Jackson's Presidency, when efforts were being made to purchase Texas, the *Ohio State Journal* and various other Ohio newspapers expressed the view that the policy of acquiring additional territory might in general be open to question but that the acquisition of Texas "on fair and honorable terms" would be a popular measure in Ohio. Especially was this the case since Texas might "soon pass into other hands either by treaty or conquest."³¹ When the movement for Texan independence reached a critical stage in 1835-36, meetings were held, like those in Columbus in May, 1836, which adopted resolutions that the Texans were "but acting upon the motives of the heroes of the American Revolution." A committee was appointed to receive funds for equipping and defraying the expenses of volunteers in the Texas cause. Several young men from Columbus enrolled, and two cannon were forwarded as a gift of Cincinnatians.³² Early in 1837, the "Boston Circus," which was then exhibiting in Cincinnati (with "grand pony races" as a concluding feature), gave a benefit for the cause.³³ David T. Disney, a leading Cincinnati politician and banker, was chair-

³⁰ Holt, *Party Politics in Ohio*, 147-50.

³¹ Columbus *Ohio State Journal*, Sept. 24, 1829.

³² *Ibid.*, May 21, 1836; Columbus *Ohio People's Press*, May 25, 1836; Cincinnati *Gazette*, Sept. 13, 1836.

³³ *Ibid.*, Feb. 10, 1837.

man of all the Ohio groups acting in behalf of Texas. Sixty-six muskets and accouterments which were the property of the State were dispatched to Texas, a procedure which led to a judgment at law for over a thousand dollars against Disney and two associates in 1839. Andrew Jackson's cautious policy toward Texas which eventuated in recognition of it in 1837, was generally approved in the State, for by that time many Ohioans were questioning the advisability of agreeing to its annexation unless provision was made for the exclusion of slavery.³⁴ Early in 1838, resolutions presented to the Ohio legislature by Benjamin F. Wade were adopted by large majorities in both houses in opposition to the annexation of the "Lone Star Republic."³⁵ The issue was not pressed, however, until it became troublesome in the Presidential campaign of 1844.

After the quarrel between Tyler and the Nationalist Whigs in 1841, most Ohio Whigs had looked forward to the nomination of Clay for the Presidency in 1844. Some, however, remembered his defeats in 1824 and 1832, and after Corwin's defeat for the governorship, there was a movement in the State in favor of John McLean. A number of Ohio congressmen, such as Joshua R. Giddings, the well-known antislavery leader who had continued in the Whig ranks, Samuel Stokely, Benjamin S. Cowen, Patrick G. Goode, William Russell, and Calvary Morris, were favorable to him. To such a man as Giddings, McLean, a northern non-slaveholder, was much more acceptable than Clay, a southern slaveholder. Others hoped that McLean might command the votes of the followers of John C. Calhoun and John Tyler, as well as those of the Nationalist Whigs. By the fall of 1843, however, McLean's old friend, Elisha Whittlesey, wrote that Clay's nomination was "about as certain, as his existence." By that time friends of McLean were urging him to run on the same ticket with Clay, but he declared that he had "always felt a strong disinclination" for the Vice-Presidency and that it would be unwise to have the party

³⁴ David T. Disney to Allen, Cincinnati, Mar. 31, 1846, Allen MSS.; St. Clairsville (Ohio) *Belmont Chronicle*, Jan. 28, 1837.

³⁵ Ohio General Assembly, *House Journal*, 36 Assemb., 523; *Senate Journal*, 36 Assemb., 288-91.

candidates from adjoining states.³⁶ During the spring of 1843, there was a movement in Ohio for Daniel Webster on the part of those who opposed Clay as a slaveholder, a duellist, and as a friend of the Bank. But there was no popular enthusiasm for the New Englander, who was regarded as grossly immoral, as loyal to Tyler, and as one who lived in a hotbed of nativism.³⁷

Clay's ultimate strength in Ohio depended to a considerable extent upon the course of the antislavery movement. Since Clay favored gradual emancipation, seemingly even the antislavery Whigs in the Western Reserve might support him, especially since, on economic questions, many of them wholeheartedly agreed with his protectionist principles. In fact by the summer of 1842, even in the Western Reserve, enthusiasm for Clay was overwhelming.³⁸ During the State campaign of 1842, Clay spoke at Dayton for two hours at a great barbecue attended by perhaps 100,000 people. He endeavored to conciliate the Democrats and to stress the importance of the Whig tariff. Only a few weeks before, the State Whig Young Men's Convention at Newark had named him as their favorite for the Presidency; and in other parts of the Union similar demonstrations were taking place.

In spite of these encouraging trends the Texas question beclouded the issues, and the Whigs realized that their political success in Ohio depended upon the prevention of serious losses to the Liberty Party. In 1840, as has been shown, the Liberty strength in Ohio was inconsequential, though possessing aggressive leaders in Dr. Gamaliel Bailey, General J. H. Paine, and former Senator Thomas Morris. By 1841 such potent converts as Salmon P. Chase and Samuel Lewis, both of Cincinnati, allied themselves with the cause. Soon, such men as Leicester Ford and Edward Wade from the Western Reserve with experience in the State legislature added their zeal and counsel to the party efforts. By 1843, a party paper, the Warren *Liberty Herald*, was established to supplement, in

³⁶ F. P. Weisenburger, *Life of John McLean* (Columbus, 1937), 103-4.

³⁷ G. R. Poage, *Henry Clay and the Whig Party* (Chapel Hill, 1936), 110-1.

³⁸ Holt, *Party Politics in Ohio*, 182.

northern Ohio, the work of the *Philanthropist* in the southern part of the State. The party aimed at the abolition of slavery in the territories and the District of Columbia. In the meanwhile, local conventions were being held. Leicester King, running for the governorship in 1842 polled 5,134 votes to 119,774 for Shannon and 117,902 for Corwin, an indication that the party might possess the balance of power between the major parties. During 1843, according to Ewing, the Liberty men in Ohio were becoming "increasingly troublesome," and the Whigs were alarmed by desertions to the Liberty camp. At this time a large part of the leadership of the Liberty Party was being furnished by Ohioans. At their national convention in Buffalo in September, 1843, three from Ohio guided the deliberations, King as president, Samuel Lewis as vice-president, and Chase as the author of the resolutions.³⁹

Clay clearly understood the desirability of unifying the party in Ohio and in other states, and hoping to aid that process, in April, 1844, he gave to the public his famous "Raleigh letter." In this, he asserted that the country did not need additional territory, but that if Texas could be secured without dishonor or war at a fair price and without endangering the Union, its annexation might be viewed with favor. Since such circumstances did not then exist, Clay was opposed to the acquiring of Texas, and Van Buren took a similar stand the same day in a letter published in the *Washington Globe*. Clay's leadership was now stronger than before, and three days later Ohioans joined in nominating him for the Presidency at the national party convention in Baltimore.

In the meantime, Ohio Democrats had also looked eagerly forward to the campaign of 1844. Shortly after the great Whig victory of 1840, the undaunted antibank Democrat, Moses Dawson of the Cincinnati *Advertiser*, had placed Van Buren's name at the head of his editorial columns as the candidate for 1844. Elijah Hayward, one of Jackson's earliest supporters in Ohio, wrote to Van Buren early in 1841 that by 1844 "it is to be hoped, the *south* will look

³⁹ T. C. Smith, *Liberty and Free Soil Parties in the Northwest* (New York, 1897), 56-61, 70.

to its own interests, and the *north* will come to its senses.”⁴⁰ The Locofoco Democrats dominated the party in Ohio, and they were definitely committed to the Van Buren leadership. Their cause was strengthened by the party victory in Ohio in 1841, by the severe Latham Bank Act of 1842, and by a visit of Van Buren during the summer of 1842 to a number of Ohio cities in the course of a western trip. These factors, in turn, contributed to Democratic success in the elections of 1842, which meant another six-year term for Allen, one of the most inflexible hard money men in the United States Senate.⁴¹ When the vote was taken in the legislature in December, Allen received all of the sixty-three Democratic votes to forty-four for the Whig candidate, Thomas Ewing. Van Buren in expectation of the result, had already written his congratulations to the Ohio senator:

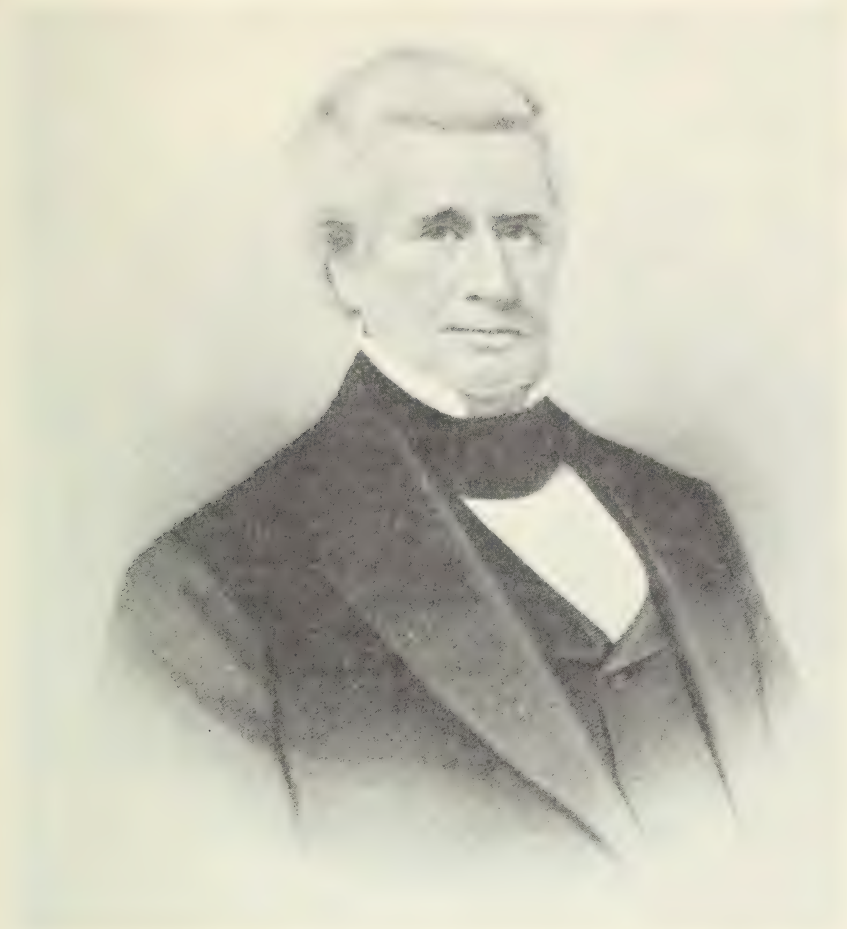
“To be reelected to the Senate of the U. S. from such a state as Ohio, after passing through such an ordeal, and bearing yourself so openly and manfully as you have done, is an honor not easily to be eclipsed in this or any other country. . . . Why can’t you and Mr. Tappan pay me a short visit on your way to Washington? There are no two men whom it would give me more pleasure to have under my roof.”⁴²

A relatively small but energetic group in Ohio favored conservative monetary views and Cass’s nomination in 1844. During 1843 and at the Democratic State Convention of January, 1844, determined efforts were made to secure the selection of Cass delegates to the national convention, but the Van Buren men succeeded in obtaining a delegation instructed for the New Yorker. Early in 1843 Cass had been entertained in Cincinnati by a group of Bank Democrats, including David T. Disney, and resolutions had been adopted in favor of Cass. Shannon, Hamer, and others endeavored to convert the party in Ohio to the Cass interest, but Stanton, Tappan, Medary, and Whitman remained thoroughly committed

⁴⁰ Letter from McConnellsville, O., Jan. 16, 1841, Van Buren MSS.

⁴¹ R. C. McGrane, *William Allen* (Columbus, 1925), 91.

⁴² Martin Van Buren to Allen, Kinderhook, Oct. 20, 1842, Allen MSS.



36. WILLIAM ALLEN (1803-1879)

A leading Ohio Democrat, congressman, and United States senator (1837-49). Courtesy of Ohio State Museum.

to Van Buren.⁴³ One difficulty, from the point of view of the Van Buren men was the lack of a suitable press in Cleveland, where the *Plain Dealer* was "leaning towards Cass and Tylerism," and in Cincinnati, where the *Daily Enquirer* was definitely a Cass

⁴³ Holt, *Party Politics in Ohio*, 172-7.

organ. Early in 1844, however, Charles Brough acquired H. H. Robinson's interest in the *Enquirer*, and it was hoped that it would be "a strong engine for Van and the Democratic party."⁴⁴

Friends of Van Buren agreed with David Tod that nineteen-twentieths of the party in Ohio favored the New Yorker as their first choice.⁴⁵ They, moreover, were not displeased with Van Buren's declaration as to Texas, though some thought that it might injure the southern wing of the party. Led by Medary and Whitman, the Ohio delegation to the national convention at Baltimore in May was determined to nominate Van Buren. The only Ohio delegate unenthusiastic for the New Yorker was Samuel Lahm. The two-thirds rule prevented the Ohioans from accomplishing their purpose, for southern delegates were not satisfied with Van Buren's views. Ohio delegates like T. W. Bartley and Whitman were aroused almost to violence by the failure of the convention to nominate their favorite who had received a majority vote. At this juncture, Medary, determined that Ohio's vote should not go for Cass, headed off a movement in the delegation in that direction. The strength of the delegation was, accordingly, thrown to Silas Wright of New York. Ultimately, the Van Buren men were persuaded to support Polk who obtained the nomination on a platform pledging the "re-occupation of Oregon and the re-annexation of Texas."⁴⁶

The reoccupation of Oregon was a popular issue in Ohio. An Oregon Convention, attended by persons from many states had been held at Cincinnati on July 5, 1843. Medary had served as one of the vice-presidents of the meeting, and prominent Democrats, *e.g.*, Dawson, John Hamm, Disney, and Allen G. Thurman, as well as some Whigs, were among the sponsors. It had been agreed that measures should be taken to secure the immediate occupation of Oregon by the United States.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ W. V. Crow to Allen, Cleveland, O., Dec. 17, 1843, Allen MSS.; Faran to *id.*, Cincinnati, Feb. 25, 1844, *ibid.*

⁴⁵ Tod to *id.*, Warren, Dec. 25, 1843, *ibid.*

⁴⁶ Holt, *Party Politics in Ohio*, 198-200.

⁴⁷ Circular, Allen MSS.

The firm attachment of Ohio Democratic leaders for Van Buren made it difficult to stimulate enthusiasm for Polk, although the defeat of Cass and Calhoun at the convention was comforting. Polk's famous "Kane letter" favoring "reasonable incidental protection" to American industry proved satisfactory to the party in Ohio. Some campaigners revived the old "corrupt bargain" charge against Clay. The Texas question and Whig advocacy of a national bank, were, however, the leading issues in Ohio, the Democrats once again pledging their support to the independent treasury. As the weeks went by, Clay qualified his opposition to the annexation of Texas, as expressed in the Raleigh letter, and wrote his so-called "Alabama letters" asserting that he was not personally opposed to annexation. Most of the antislavery men in Ohio who had not joined the Liberty Party were Whigs, though Edwin Stanton was one who was prominent among the Democrats. The Liberty men endeavored to win over the antislavery Whigs on the Western Reserve. At a State convention in Columbus, February 7, they had nominated King for governor. The October State elections gave Tod 145,022; Bartley, 146,333; King, 8,898. Again, the Liberty men seemed to hold the balance between the major parties.⁴⁸ James G. Birney was the candidate of the Liberty Party for the Presidency, as he had been before. Two incidents in the fall of 1844 probably lost support for him in the Presidential election in November. He had been nominated as a Democrat for the Michigan legislature; and a forged "Garland letter" had been circulated to the effect that, if elected, he would not agitate the slavery question.

The Presidential contest was a heated one in Ohio. Such men as Hamer, Cass, and Medary toured the State for Polk. Among the Whig campaigners were Corwin and Ewing, the latter probably making more speeches than in any other campaign in which he participated. On the Texas issue, these Whig leaders attempted to brand the Democratic strategy as a scheme to obtain more slave territory for the southern slaveholders. Doubtless the argument

⁴⁸ Ohio Secretary of State, *Annual Report* . . . 1876 (Columbus, 1876), 91.

that the Whig tariff of 1812 had revived prosperity, and the reaction in State politics against the extreme antibank policy of the Democrats, were helpful to the Whigs. The foreign-born vote in Ohio in general was cast in favor of the Democrats. German-American political groups printed accounts of Polk's life in German, and many immigrant leaders, especially among the Catholics, were irritated by the nativist tendencies of Frelinghuysen, the Whig Vice-Presidential nominee. The Catholic bishop and many priests were accused of using their influence against the Whig ticket.⁴⁹

The vote in Ohio gave Polk 149,061; Clay, 155,113; Birney, 8,050. Thus, Clay received the electoral vote of the State, but a different verdict in the country at large made James K. Polk President.

⁴⁹ Paul I. Miller, "Thomas Ewing, Last of the Whigs," Ph.D. thesis, Ohio State University, 1933.

Sectionalism and State Problems

ONE result of the elections of 1844 in Ohio was the control of the legislature by the Whigs, and that meant the election of a United States senator of that party. For some time, Thomas Corwin and Thomas Ewing had been amiable rivals for preferment at the hands of the party, and in 1844 both coveted the senatorship. But Corwin was highly popular and had headed the State ticket in 1842 under discouraging circumstances, while Ewing had already enjoyed one term as senator. The Whig caucus, therefore, gave Corwin forty-seven votes to sixteen for Ewing, and when the legislature made the official choice, Corwin received sixty votes to forty-six for the Democratic candidate, David T. Disney, with one vote for Ebenezer Lane. Thus, Corwin was selected to occupy the seat held by Benjamin Tappan. This was the first time, and as it happened, the only time in Ohio's history that the Whigs were able to elect a senator without the aid of any minor group.¹

The fact that Ohio had gone for Clay in the election was not conducive to patronage rewards for Ohio Democrats under the Polk Administration, especially since most of them had been very zealous for Martin Van Buren previous to the nomination. Nor was it conducive to harmony in the party, since many Ohioans were already coming to distrust the aggressiveness of the slavocracy and were discontented because of the alleged failure of the National Government to recognize the rapidly growing importance of the Northwest.

The Democratic votes in the legislature in the senatorial contest of December, 1844, for Disney, a conservative Cass man, rather than for the radical Tappan, may have been due in part to the fact

¹ Paul I. Miller, "Thomas Ewing, Last of the Whigs," Ph.D. thesis, Ohio State University, 1933, 196-7.

that the latter was almost seventy-two years of age; but it seemed also to indicate the ascendancy of the anti-Van Buren faction of the party, and Disney hoped to use this evidence of the party's endorsement to secure an appointment from James K. Polk.² He sought the post of minister to Russia and received the earnest support of Lewis Cass; but Samuel Medary persuaded Polk to refuse the appointment. At a critical moment in the maneuverings at the Democratic convention in 1844, Medary, long an aggressive leader of the party, had pledged the vote of the Ohio delegation to Polk.³ Hence, his friends believed him entitled to a cabinet appointment, and a petition to that end was forwarded from members of the State legislature. They had the position of postmaster-general specifically in mind, and Ohio Democrats in Washington, led by Senator William Allen, went to the White House to demand the appointment. Apparently conservative Ohio Democrats, such as Rufus P. Spalding, William Sawyer and Edson B. Olds, were active for Cass as a representative of the Old Northwest, and Polk denied the appointment to Medary who later learned indirectly that his Van Buren connections had been a stumbling-block to his ambitions. Medary received the postmastership at Columbus and then disposed of his paper, the *Ohio Statesman*, to Charles C. Hazewell; but he became dissatisfied with the political position and toward the end of 1846 again resumed control of the Democratic State organ. He endeavored to obtain an appointment to the foreign service, but in 1847 when David Tod instead was appointed minister to Brazil, Medary complained that Tod had tricked him in the affair.⁴ When Medary resumed the direction of the *Ohio Statesman*, Tappan accused him of violating a promise made to Tappan's son, Eli, that he would "not again edit the *Statesman* or any other paper in Columbus." On the strength of that promise Eli Tappan had established the *Ohio Press* in that city. Benjamin Tappan and Medary thereupon became personal enemies.⁵

² E. M. Stanton to Benjamin Tappan, Columbus, Dec. 5, 1844, J. K. Wright MSS.

³ E. I. McCormac, *James K. Polk* (Berkeley, Calif., 1922), 238-9.

⁴ E. A. Holt, *Party Politics in Ohio, 1840-1850* (Columbus, 1930), 217ff.

⁵ Tappan to William Allen, Steubenville, Nov. 11, 1846, Allen MSS.

Thus, during Polk's administration, factionalism and bitterness were rampant within the portals of Democracy in Ohio. En route from Tennessee to Washington for his inauguration Polk had journeyed via Cincinnati. When some Democratic leaders urged him to visit Dayton and Columbus, certain Cincinnati Democrats tried to keep him "from the office seekers and cabinet makers at the capital," and he did not stop at either Dayton or Columbus. When almost any Democrat from Ohio sought an appointment under Polk, some objections were raised by other members of the party. Little wonder, therefore, that many younger members of the organization lost interest in party affairs. One of them, John Brough, refused to endorse any applicants for office.⁶ Ohioans soon complained that it was very difficult, if not impossible, to secure an appointment under Polk. Many of the Tyler appointees, who had generally supported William Henry Harrison in 1840 and Polk in 1844, were retained in office, much to the anger of the old-time Democrats; and the Democratic State Convention of 1847 in Ohio condemned the National Administration for its policy in that respect.⁷

The Democratic platform of 1844 had promised the "re-annexation of Texas." Earlier in 1844, when John C. Calhoun had presented his proposed treaty to the United States Senate for the annexation of Texas, the question had been discussed in secret session. The terms of the treaty had not been publicly announced, but through the agency of Benjamin Tappan, they were published in the New York *Evening Post*. Tappan acknowledged his sole responsibility for the revelation of the information and was severely censured by the Senate.⁸ In June, when the proposed treaty was rejected, both Tappan and Allen voted against it.⁹ The new legislature of Ohio was under Whig control. It proceeded by resolutions of January 13, 1845, to instruct its senators to oppose the

⁶ John Brough to *id.*, Columbus, Apr. 29, 1845, *ibid.*

⁷ Holt, *Party Politics*, 220.

⁸ Tappan to Senator William S. Archer, Apr. 30, 1844, J. K. Wright MSS.

⁹ *Senate Journal*, 28 Cong., 1 Sess., 438ff.

annexation of Texas for antislavery reasons, but the two Democratic senators did not feel bound to follow the wishes of a Whig legislature. Some Whig papers in Ohio were much irritated by this independent spirit, but Charles B. Flood, a Democrat, wrote to Allen: "The Texas resolutions *instructing* you and Judge Tappan were forced through the Senate, as you will see by the reports, without giving even the minority of the committee to whom they were referred, a chance of examining them, and certainly no senator of the minority had a chance to see, much less examine them. They were rushed through under the dictation of Alfred Kelley, by those who bow to his dictation."¹⁰

Some Whigs, like former Congressman Samuel Vinton, hoped that if the matter were delayed long enough, something might occur to prevent annexation, but were not prepared to oppose it to the point of risking the dissolution of the Union. Joshua R. Giddings, animated by a distrust of the rising southern political influence, felt that annexation must be averted at all costs except possibly the dissolution of the Union; and he wished the Whigs to assume such positive leadership in the fight that they would absorb the Liberty Party. There were Democrats too who feared the increasing power of southern sectional leaders and who wished to maintain amicable relations with Mexico.¹¹ Yet, when John Tyler, before retiring from the Presidency, had a joint resolution introduced into Congress (December, 1844) for annexation, even Tappan, who had violated the Senate rules to publicize the Calhoun treaty in order to defeat it, voted for it.

On the other hand, in the House of Representatives, Jacob Brinkerhoff, congressman from the Mansfield district, broke with his party for the first time on this question. He had supported the party platform in the campaign of 1844, but he believed that the question of Texas ought not be rushed through Congress. He thought Tyler was too much interested in Texas and too little concerned about Oregon. At heart, Brinkerhoff was an expansion-

¹⁰ C. B. Flood to Allen, Columbus, Ohio, Jan. 16, 1845, Allen MSS.

¹¹ Holt, *Party Politics*, 222ff.

ist but like many other northerners he feared the political power of the South. Hence, on January 25, 1845, he introduced an amendment to the joint resolution of annexation, providing as a fundamental condition of annexation that slavery should forever be prohibited in the western and northwestern half of the acquired region. This was promptly rejected, and so, on the same day, when the vote was taken on the joint resolution, Brinkerhoff voted in the negative.¹² On the joint resolution, eight Ohio congressmen voted in favor of passage and ten in opposition.¹³ In final form the joint resolution was approved March 1, 1845, just before Tyler retired from the Presidency.

Texas accepted the offer of annexation, and in December, 1845, Congress approved her admission as a slave state. The other part of the expansionist program, "re-occupation of Oregon" remained to be fulfilled. Ohio Democrats who had supported the party in its program of southern expansion expected equal speed and zeal in the acquiring of all of Oregon. With Allen of Ohio as chairman of the powerful Senate Foreign Relations Committee, it was expected that the campaign slogan of "54° 40' or fight" would be aggressively carried out. Henry C. Whitman wrote to Allen, "We feel our destinies are confided to a bold, talented, firm and skilful Pilot. The heart, bone and sinew of the Nation will sustain you in any course you adopt."¹⁴

Polk, in his inaugural address, had spoken of the title of the United States to Oregon as "clear and unquestionable," but in July, 1845, he had ordered his secretary of state, James Buchanan, to negotiate with Great Britain on the basis of the forty-ninth parallel. This offer being rejected, it was withdrawn by Polk, who in his annual message of December, 1845, asserted the right to all of Oregon and recommended that Congress take steps to terminate the joint occupation of the region. The *Ohio Statesman*

¹² W. W. Blauser, "Congressional and Political Career of Jacob Brinkerhoff, 1843-1855," M. A. thesis, Ohio State University, 1938.

¹³ *House Journal*, 28 Cong., 2 Sess., 264-5.

¹⁴ Henry C. Whitman to Allen, Apr. 28, 1845, Allen MSS.

rejoiced that the spirit of compromise had passed.¹⁵ Ohio Democrats were extremely chauvinistic. One wrote to Allen that the United States could whip the world in a just cause, "and if the old grannies in Congress who are shaking in their shoes for fear of the British cannon can muster courage to leave Congress and come West our Western women will hide them with the children while they fight the enemy." Another declared, "The whole of Oregon nothing less is almost the universal sentiment of this section [vicinity of Lebanon] of Ohio and I believe that of the whole Mississippi Valley."¹⁶

In January, 1846, when a resolution to terminate the joint occupation was under discussion in the House of Representatives, Brinkerhoff of Ohio took an active part in advocating its passage. He declared that after a careful study of the question he had become convinced that the title of the United States to the whole of Oregon was clear and unquestionable. "We do not want war," he cried, "but if we must have it, we would a great deal rather fight Great Britain than some other power, for we do not love her."¹⁷

At this stage in the course of events, Ohio Whigs, although eager for all of Oregon, were fearful that abrupt action on the part of the Democrats might lead to an unnecessary war. Yet, such Whigs as Giddings and Columbus Delano believed that even an armed conflict might not be too high a price to pay for the strengthening of the position of the free states.¹⁸ At the same time Ohio Democrats became increasingly irritated at the opposition of certain southern Democrats to the Oregon demands and warned Allen that abolitionism in Ohio would fatten upon a rejection of northwestern expansion. Spurred on by the fiery utterances of his correspondents, Allen insisted upon nothing less than the whole of Oregon in an address in the Senate, February 10, 1846, which his biographer has termed "his greatest speech."¹⁹ Two weeks later,

¹⁵ Dec. 8, 1845.

¹⁶ R. C. McGrane, *William Allen* (Columbus, 1925), 107.

¹⁷ *Congressional Globe*, 29 Cong., 1 Sess., 205.

¹⁸ Holt, *Party Politics*, 229-30.

¹⁹ McGrane, *William Allen*, 109.

however, in a conference with Polk, Allen was unable to commit the President to such a course. Late in April, Congress authorized the President to serve notice at his discretion of the termination of joint occupation, and shortly afterwards he did so, at the same time courteously insisting that the initiative for any further negotiation would have to come from Great Britain.

On March 23, Allen endeavored to get the President to agree that any compromise proposed by Great Britain should be submitted to the Senate with a Presidential note emphatically urging its rejection. Polk, however, refused to commit himself on this point, and relations between the President and the Ohio senator thereafter were less amiable. On April 25, Polk pointedly expressed to Allen his regret that some members of Congress were questioning his sincerity, and confided in his diary that Allen was obsessed with Presidential aspirations.²⁰ In June, a draft treaty was sent by Great Britain, proposing the forty-ninth parallel, with all Vancouver Island remaining in British possession, as a compromise boundary. Against Allen's advice, Polk submitted it to the Senate for its consideration before he signed it; the Senate advised acceptance and later sanctioned ratification; and Allen resigned from the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

A peaceful solution of difficulties with Great Britain was most acceptable to prudent Americans, for war between the United States and Mexico had already begun. When Congress in May officially recognized the existence of a state of war, only five congressmen from Ohio voted in the negative: Giddings (from Jefferson); Delano (from Mt. Vernon); Joseph M. Root (from Norwalk); Daniel R. Tilden (from Ravenna); and Joseph Vance (from Urbana). All were Whigs. At that time Brinkerhoff, vehement pronorthern Democrat, and Allen supported the President.²¹ Giddings in a speech in Congress complained that the President's ordering of the army to the Rio Grande had been "with the full intention of bringing on a war with Mexico, without consulting

²⁰ James K. Polk, *Diary*, ed. by M. M. Quaife (Chicago, 1910), I, 300, 359-60.

²¹ McGrane, *William Allen*, 120-1.

Congress." The New Lisbon (Ohio) *Anti-Slavery Bugle* likewise was irritated that the American Government was becoming involved in bloodshed over Texas which had been meanly stolen "from a feeble nation, while professing friendship for her." The Whig *Ohio State Journal* considered the war message a "labored" attempt to demonstrate that the United States was not really the aggressor, but it called for a united front against the enemy. Ewing wrote to William Bebb, Whig candidate for governor, "Our country is now engaged in war—we must all unite to bring her successfully and honorably out of the struggle."²²

Governor Mordecai Bartley had been personally opposed to war with Mexico and was urged by some party friends to refuse to cooperate with the Federal Government in the recruiting of troops. But he issued, on May 20, an official call for volunteers. "I now appeal," his proclamation read, "to the gallant and spirited sons of Ohio, to come forward in this emergency and promptly meet the expectations of the General Government. Let it not be said that when our country appeals to the courage and patriotism of the citizen soldiers of Ohio for aid, that that aid was not promptly rendered. Whatever may be the diversity of views, it is now sufficient for us to know that war exists on our borders; and that it is our duty to exert every effort to secure a speedy and honorable termination." The war spirit spread rapidly. Thomas L. Hamer, the only Democratic politician of the time who could rival the eloquence of the Whig Corwin, assisted in raising the First Ohio Volunteers and was commissioned a brigadier-general. A son of Tappan sought a place as a surgeon with the Ohio volunteers. The Germans of Cincinnati proceeded to raise a corps from among the German residents.²³ Everywhere demonstrations were held to further enlistments, and the young ladies did their part in persuading the Ohio boys to join the colors. By various means money was raised for the volunteers and their needy families,

²² Quoted in Miller, "Thomas Ewing," 198-9.

²³ Stanton to Allen, Steubenville, July 13, 1846, Allen MSS.; Charles Reemelin to *id.*, Cincinnati, May 15, 1846, *ibid.*

Nicholas Longworth of Cincinnati personally donating \$30,000.²⁴

Troops from Ohio assembled at Camp Washington, Cincinnati. Some companies marched to Columbus or were transported there in wagons, and then were taken by canal-boats and river steamers to Cincinnati. The First Ohio Regiment left Cincinnati on July 2, for the war front, and was soon followed by the Second and Third regiments. Later, Ohio troops were engaged in battle at Vera Cruz and Monterey. In reporting to the governor concerning the part played by Ohioans in the latter battle, Hamer wrote: "I am sure you would have been proud of them. They walked into the most galling and murderous crossfires of the enemy with the coolness of old regular soldiers—not a man or officer flinching. They formed and fired upon the enemy with steadiness and obeyed every order promptly."

In the meantime, in Congress, Brinkerhoff, smarting under Polk's Oregon policy and his refusal to appoint him a paymaster in the army, cooled off toward the war; and a large part of the Whigs rejected the unpartisan nationalism which Ewing had exhibited. Justice John McLean wrote that all with whom he had conversed had been "utterly opposed" to the invasion of Mexico, and Whig newspapers in Ohio denounced Polk and upheld the Mexicans as objects of humanitarian sympathy. As the American armies invaded the interior of Mexico, Whig newspapers and county meetings became steadily more hostile toward the "Democratic war" based upon a "vulgar greed" for territory. In this, they apparently were actuated partly by a sincere opposition to acquisition of slave territory and partly by political opposition to the party which was carrying on the war. Antislavery men of all parties opposed voting any funds to secure territory from Mexico that would not be free soil. A proviso to this effect was introduced by David Wilmot (Democrat) of Pennsylvania and passed the House of Representatives in August, 1846, but never obtained the approval of the United States Senate. There has been much discus-

²⁴I am much indebted to Oliver N. Johnson, "Ohio in the Mexican War," M. A. thesis, Ohio State University, 1926, 56-64.

sion as to whether Wilmot or Brinkerhoff was really the father of the proviso. As early as September 16, 1846, Brinkerhoff wrote to the Mansfield (Ohio) *Shield and Banner*:

"Accordingly, I drew up an amendment to the bill [appropriating money for the settlement of the boundary], the original of which is now in my possession and which I intend to preserve as an heirloom for my posterity. . . . This, I presented to Mr. Wilmot of Pennsylvania, a gentleman of talents and firmness, and requested him to offer it; which, having first copied it in his own hand, he did. . . ." ²⁵ This was a year before Wilmot, in a number of speeches, asserted that he had suggested the idea of a proviso to several friends and that Brinkerhoff's draft was accepted as the most satisfactory; but several recent scholars are convinced that the *initiative* in the matter of the proviso came from Wilmot. ²⁶

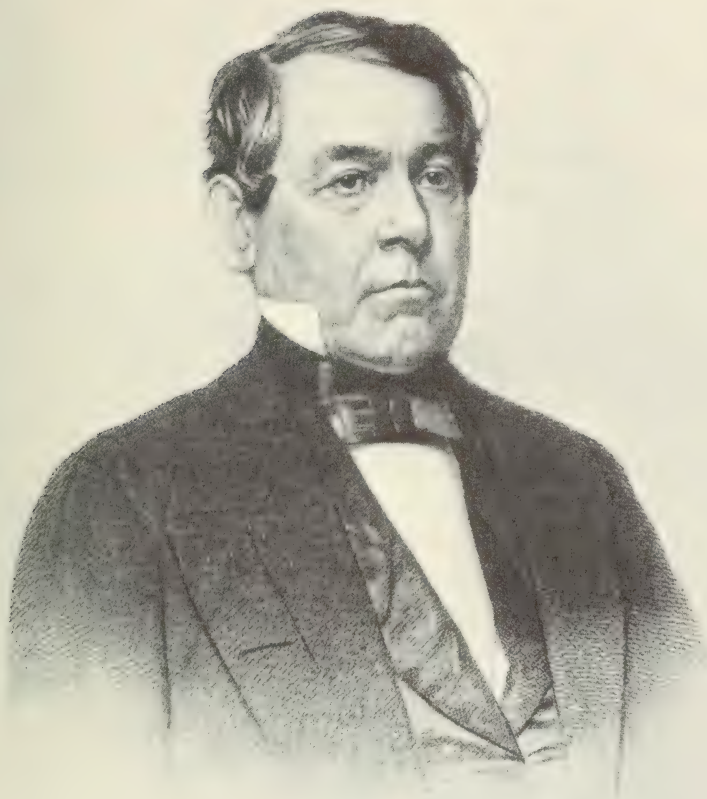
At any rate, the Whig Party was seriously embarrassed by the proviso, for Whigs in Ohio, and throughout the North, supported it, while those in the South bitterly opposed it. Under such circumstances it was nearly impossible for any ambitious Whig politician to express views on the questions of the day so as to satisfy party members on both sides of the Mason-Dixon line. In Ohio, even such a conservative Whig as Ewing thought that the action of the southern senators in the summer of 1846 in rejecting the Wilmot Proviso was a dark omen, and he urged Bebb, the Whig candidate for governor, to attack their attitude. ²⁷

During the State campaign of 1846, Whig orators denounced the "unjust war." In December, the retiring governor, Bartley, contended that if Polk had sent troops into Mexico to compel a speedy and honorable peace, his conduct had been perhaps excusable if not entirely justifiable, but that if he had the intention of acquiring territory, he had violated the "spirit and true intent" of the Federal Constitution. Similarly, Bebb in his inaugural

²⁵ Copied in Columbus *Ohio Statesman*, Oct. 2, 1846, and quoted by Blauser, "Brinkerhoff," 47.

²⁶ R. R. Stenberg, "Motivation of the Wilmot Proviso," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* (Cedar Rapids, Iowa), XVIII (1931), 535-41.

²⁷ Miller, "Thomas Ewing," 200.



37. THOMAS CORWIN (1794-1865)

Prominent Ohio Whig, governor (1840-42), United States senator (1845-50) and secretary of the treasury (1850-53). From *Biographical Encyclopaedia of Ohio* (Cincinnati, 1876), facing p. 32.

address of the same month, demanded: "Where is the man who does not know and feel that this Mexican War is a Presidential War?"

The Whig-controlled State legislature, meeting in December, felt constrained to pass resolutions favoring an increase in the pay of volunteers and adequate relief for the indigent families of veterans.²⁸ Some Whigs, however, were opposed to congressional appropriations for the continuance of the war. Corwin, who was ambitious for the Presidency, expressed his views, February 11, 1847, in a dramatic speech in the Senate, that, in some respects, is one of the most amazing oratorical efforts in the history of that body. He exclaimed:

"What is the territory, Mr. President, which you propose to wrest from Mexico? It is consecrated to the heart of the Mexican by many a well-fought battle with his old Castilian master. His Bunker Hills and Saratogas, and Yorktowns, are there! The Mexican can say, 'There I bled for liberty! and shall I surrender that consecrated home of my affections to the Anglo-Saxon invaders?' . . . If I were a Mexican, I would tell you, 'Have you not room in your country to bury your dead men? If you come into mine, we will greet you with bloody hands, and welcome you to hospitable graves.' " ²⁹ Corwin's speech was warmly commended in some Whig circles, especially among the ultra antislavery group. Joshua R. Giddings rejoiced that it had alarmed the prosouthern Democrats of the North and had enabled the young Whigs to "laugh in their sleeves and hold up their heads"; and he considered Corwin at the moment "the most popular man in the nation."³⁰ But Giddings was a fanatic, and long after the admission of Texas to the Union he had hoped that Ohio might abjure all connection with the Lone Star State; hence, he was hardly representative of the party.³¹ A few days before Corwin's speech there had been a movement

²⁸ Johnson, "Ohio in the Mexican War," 15-6.

²⁹ *Cong. Globe*, 29 Cong., 2 Sess., Appendix, 216-7.

³⁰ Joshua R. Giddings to Joseph A. Giddings, Feb. 22, 1847, Giddings MSS.

³¹ R. P. Ludlum, "Joshua R. Giddings, Radical," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XXIII (1936), 53.

among the senator's friends in the legislature in Columbus in his behalf; Bebb disliked the possibility of a military candidate and preferred Corwin "to all living men"; and the speech may have been timed in the hope of developing a boom for Corwin. If such was the intention, the result was disappointing.

One effect was to cause McLean, another ambitious Ohio Whig, to ponder his views on the war. He asserted, in a private letter, that the charge that he favored the war was "most outrageous," for all his utterances had been "condemnatory." Never was a war waged "for more unholy purposes," and he "would as soon sustain any other robbery as to rob these poor wretches of their homes." Yet, to refuse to support the army, as the experience of the War of 1812 had shown, would not end the war and would be party suicide.³² Many Whig leaders in Ohio insisted, however, that only by refraining from voting supplies for the army could the war be ended, and sought to embarrass the Administration in every possible way. Such opposition was largely confined to New England and to Ohio, and the Democratic Party in the State came vigorously to the support of Polk's policies. Clement L. Vallandigham, as a spokesman for the Ohio Democracy, introduced into the Ohio House of Representatives, December 15, 1846, a set of resolutions, one of which endorsed the justice of war and urged whole-hearted support of the Administration. The legislature, controlled by the Whigs, rejected these resolutions by a strict party vote and passed instead resolutions condemning Polk and the war. Local Democratic meetings proceeded to denounce the Whig policy as akin to treason and as responsible for the prolongation of the war. Ohio Democrats charged that the Mexicans believed a Whig victory in 1847 would mean abandonment of the war. Later in 1847, Charles Reemelin of Cincinnati presented a petition to the State Senate from eighty-one Richland County citizens requesting the legislature to secure Corwin's resignation and to send him to the penitentiary for the duration of the conflict. Olds,

³² John McLean to John Teesdale, Cincinnati, Apr. 6, 1847, Teesdale MSS. (in Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society Library, Columbus).

another Democratic senator, contended that it would be better for him to remain at large, "an object of scorn and hatred," as an infamous traitor. The *Ohio State Journal* retaliated by terming the resolutions "foul and malignant" and Olds a "low, truckling demagogue."³³

Amidst this party strife over the war, the churches of Ohio experienced difficulties in maintaining an attitude satisfactory to all of their constituents. Bishop John Baptist Purcell of the Roman Catholic diocese of Cincinnati was opposed to slavery and its extension but, on the outbreak of war, through the diocesan paper, the *Catholic Telegraph* (edited by his brother), declared that it was the duty of every Catholic to "enter with all his heart into the conflict."³⁴ In general, the Methodists of the country favored the war, but the Missionary Society of the Ohio Conference passed resolutions against it. The Old School Presbyterians, who were quite influential in Ohio, as a national body deplored the war as a calamity, but the pronouncements of individual ministers in Ohio varied from outspoken condemnation to hearty approval. In general, the Lutherans, Episcopalians, and Disciples of Christ, in their official utterances and periodical press, took the attitude of silent acquiescence. The Baptists and New School Presbyterians were divided in sentiment, but the Congregationalists, Unitarians, and Quakers (among whom strong antislavery views prevailed) opposed the war almost unanimously.³⁵

Volunteers who went forth from Ohio in the summer of 1846 had enlisted for one year, hence many of them returned to Ohio in July, 1847, and were the recipients of enthusiastic acclaim. In the meantime, a new call was issued for volunteers to replace those honorably discharged.³⁶ John Sherman wrote from Mansfield in May that the county had sent two companies in 1846, and

³³ Holt, *Party Politics*, 255-9.

³⁴ *Dictionary of American Biography*, ed. by Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone (New York, 1928-1937), XV (1935), 266-7.

³⁵ C. S. Ellsworth, "The American Churches and the Mexican War," *American Historical Review* (Richmond, Va.), XLV (1940), 301ff.

³⁶ Johnson, "Ohio in the Mexican War," 64-6.

that a new one would soon be on the way. He expressed the belief that 100,000 men might be had as readily as 10,000.³⁷ At Cincinnati, Camp Washington, which had been practically deserted after the departure of troops in 1846, once again was astir with activity.

Before the close of hostilities in 1848, over eight thousand (8,102) Ohioans had seen service in the war. Deaths from sickness and disease were very numerous. The most distinguished Ohioan who fell on Mexican soil was Brigadier-general Thomas L. Hamer, who had been prominent in Democratic politics. General Zachary Taylor mourned the loss as one that was, at the time, irreparable.³⁸ As a congressman Hamer had appointed Ulysses S. Grant to West Point, and later the Civil War general wrote that he was "one of the ablest men Ohio ever produced."³⁹

Although the war ostensibly had arisen because of the question of the Rio Grande boundary, it was generally recognized that the Polk Administration would earnestly seek territorial cessions as a part of the peace terms. Most leaders of Democratic opinion in Ohio disapproved of slavery extension but favored expansion, claiming that slavery could not exist in any region acquired from Mexico until it had been sanctioned there by positive enactment. Resolutions, of which Vallandigham was the principal author, and which were approved by Montgomery County Democrats in December, 1847, endorsed what later came to be known as the doctrine of popular sovereignty. Other Democratic county conventions adopted similar views. In the interests of harmony in the national party, many Ohio Democrats opposed the Wilmot Proviso; but they likewise resisted the efforts of members of the party in other states to make opposition to the Wilmot Proviso a test of party loyalty or to secure the extension of the Missouri Compromise line in any territory to be acquired.⁴⁰

³⁷ R. S. Thorndike, ed., *Sherman Letters* (New York, 1894), 38-9.

³⁸ *Ohio Statesman*, Jan. 18, 1847.

³⁹ U. S. Grant, *Personal Memoirs* (New York, 1885), I, 33, 103.

⁴⁰ Holt, *Party Politics*, 259-65.

Ohio Whigs were almost unanimous in opposing the extension of slavery into any new territory, but some national leaders of the party, Ewing for example, saw that if territory were acquired, the slavery issue might disrupt the national party organization. Hence, most Ohio Whigs opposed all territorial expansion in the Southwest.

Giddings and other antislavery men wanted to make the Wilmot Proviso the basis of party policy, but Corwin saw the danger inherent in this policy and in an effort to unite the party nationally, he denounced the abolitionists and termed the Wilmot Proviso a dangerous question, in an address at Carthage near Cincinnati in September, 1847. When he was attacked as an enemy of the proviso, he branded the charge untrue, in a letter to the Cincinnati *Atlas*. In response to criticism of his position by Giddings and others he wrote bitterly to Giddings: "I only wish . . . what all northern Whigs ought to desire, and what I believe, a large majority of them, sincerely hope for, that is, a speedy termination of the War, a just and *honest* peace, and in any event, the restriction of slavery to its present limits. How are these to be brought about? If the country could unite on the ground of the territory and let it be well known, that we get none *by the War*—the War would die in one month. It is only the hope of extorting land that keeps this War alive *at this moment*. . . . Again, it is not *certain*, if we prosecute the War and get territory, that we can extend the Wilmot Proviso over it. I incline to the belief that we cannot. . . . The leaders of the liberty party seem to me to be laboring under a most singular delusion on this subject. They say they wish to restrict slavery to its present limits. In this I agree with them *now*, as in '44 when I with yourself, labored so hard to prevent Texas annexation. They propose *one* mode (the Wilmot Proviso) of accomplishing this restriction. We propose *two*, and agree to try both, or either, as we may at the time, find one or the other most likely to secure success. . . . They denounce us as sold to the south. . . . Is not this, madness? . . ."⁴¹

⁴¹Thomas Corwin to J. R. Giddings, Lebanon, Oct. 12, 1847, Giddings MSS.

Such men as Salmon P. Chase and Giddings were disappointed in Corwin, whom they had hoped to run for the Presidency in 1848 as the candidate of all antislavery men. But, the issues emerging from the war were to receive a more immediate test in the State elections of 1847, when State problems, such as the banking question, were, in reality, minor issues. In April, the *Ohio State Journal* had proposed a State convention in opposition to the war, and other Whig papers had advocated local meetings, but the ill-fated Hartford Convention of 1814 was remembered, and the proposals did not materialize. But, as one writer has said, "From a stage of mild condemnation of the War, the Whigs had proceeded through all the phases of opposition, such a condemnation of expenses, discouragement of enlistment of armed forces, opposition to the granting of supplies, and finally to opposition to the further extension of American territory, until the Democrats were able to make the election a test of patriotism."⁴² The elections resulted in Whig control of both houses of the legislature, and Whig and some Democratic newspapers interpreted the outcome as an endorsement of Corwin's opposition to the war. When the legislature convened in December, Charles B. Goddard of Zanesville and Joseph S. Hawkins of Preble County were chosen speakers of the upper and lower houses respectively. Both were Whigs.

By this time leaders of both major parties in Ohio were looking forward to the Presidential contest of 1848. In fact, maneuvering had started even before Polk's inauguration. In November, 1844, a friend of McLean, who was a perennial Presidential aspirant, expressed the hope that he might be nominated by the Ohio legislature, and by the next August, the justice believed that a combination of abolitionists, native Americans, and Whigs might accomplish his election to the Presidency. In March, 1846, John Teesdale, acting editor of the *Ohio State Journal* and his chief lieutenant in Ohio, asserted that he was preferred by "a vast proportion of the Whigs of the Union." A dangerous competitor in Ohio, however, was Corwin. He resided in Warren County, where

⁴² Holt, *Party Politics*, 267-8.

McLean had spent his boyhood days. In contrast with the reserved justice, he was a popular and eloquent politician with a host of friends in State and national political circles. As early as 1845, Corwin clubs had been organized in Ohio to advance his Presidential claims, and in September, 1846, McLean believed that a "bold movement" for the senator was about to take place. Robert Schenck, Whig congressman from the Dayton district who was known as "a master of invective and vituperation," became especially active in behalf of Corwin and against McLean.

Early in 1847, friends of both McLean and Corwin endeavored to crystallize sentiment for their favorite candidate, and Corwin made his famous antiwar speech in the United States Senate. Two days after this burst of oratory, however, Taylor won the battle of Buena Vista, and a Presidential boom for the military hero developed with great rapidity. By May, the *Ohio State Journal* which had favored Corwin, acknowledged the drift of opinion toward Taylor and the unpopularity of Corwin's course; and outside the State, Horace Greeley by October had reluctantly concluded that the Ohio senator was "too weak to *cut-under* Old Zac."⁴³

The suggestion of Taylor's candidacy was greeted with little enthusiasm and even with defiance among antislavery Whigs of Ohio. Giddings announced that, under no circumstances, would he support Taylor's candidacy. By April, however, many Whigs had been greatly impressed with Taylor's popularity. Soon the Cincinnati *Morning Signal* published a letter received from the general, written in response to an editorial favoring his nomination. Taylor stated that he would be a candidate only out of deference to the "spontaneous" will of the people and not as the instrument of "party schemes." Stalwart Whigs were displeased with this failure to espouse the doctrines of the party, and Congressman Columbus Delano declared: "Scott . . . would be more acceptable [than Taylor], and perhaps before he comes home he will be sufficiently bloody to satisfy the patriotic portion of all parties. To kill women and children, and hurry men unprepared to eternity

⁴³F. P. Weisenburger, *Life of John McLean* (Columbus, 1937), 105ff.

because they refuse to give us their land now free in order that we may cover it with slaves, are certainly high qualifications for the highest office in the gift of a free nation of professing Christians." Delano thought that Ohioans were antislavery, antiwar, and unfavorable to Taylor; and that most of the talking was being done by town and barroom politicians.⁴⁴ In June, in order to quiet the increasing discontent among Ohio Whigs the State Central Committee of the party issued a manifesto, opposing further acquisition of territory but disclaiming any intention to bar any person from the Presidency.

In the meantime, Corwin's friends were hoping that events would develop favorably to him. Corwin wrote to a Cincinnati friend that Henry Clay was his first choice and McLean his second, and that he would have to be assured on "certain vital points" before he could support Taylor.⁴⁵ On the other hand, McLean complained that Corwin had earlier given him hearty "professions of friendship" but that, knowing him well, he had had no "confidence in his sincerity." The justice continued, "He was for Scott and I shall expect to find him for Taylor. In short, he is for himself; and his instruments are active."⁴⁶ Doubtless Corwin sincerely wished that the Whig Party might find a candidate who would be generally acceptable and was hopeful that he himself would prove to be that man. In August, 1847, he wrote to Giddings that the country seemed determined to elect Taylor, and that from all he could learn, Taylor would "not be in all the senses of the phrase a southern President." He continued, "I even entertain a hope that he will assume grounds on which we may . . . [attain] the final restoration of the Govt. to its ancient purity and permanence. But still I think the political elements are quite too unsettled at present to admit the *certainly* of any man's choice, named as yet. I think the true interests of the whole country best

⁴⁴Columbus Delano to J. R. Giddings, Mt. Vernon, O., May 25, 1847, Giddings MSS.

⁴⁵Holt, *Party Politics*, 276.

⁴⁶McLean to Teesdale, Cincinnati, Apr. 29, 1847, Teesdale MSS.

subservied by holding ourselves in position to take *that* man who is most likely to succeed and who *also* comes up to, or nearest to our views and opinions. What can we do, better than this?"⁴⁷

A month later, Corwin made his speech at Carthage (previously mentioned) and incurred the disfavor of some of the extreme antislavery men.

Early in 1848 a test of the strength of the various candidates was made at the Whig State Convention in Columbus, January 19. Many Whigs, who did not approve violent opposition toward the war, and McLean's friends, supported James Collier of Steubenville, for governor. The bitter antisouthern element wanted Delano, one of Corwin's henchmen. A third candidate was Seabury Ford of Burton, Geauga County. On the third ballot, ninety-six votes were cast for Collier, the same number for Delano, and eighty-six for Ford. Since Collier's followers preferred Ford to Delano because Ford had not violently opposed war measures, they then turned to Ford who received the nomination. Corwin's friends hoped to secure his endorsement for the Presidency but friends of Clay, Taylor, and McLean united to defeat such a move, although resolutions extravagantly praising Corwin's antiwar views were adopted by a margin of one vote. Other resolutions denounced Polk; opposed the forcible acquisition of territory from Mexico; demanded that if territory should be secured, it be free soil; and urged Congress to use "the most efficient constitutional means to end the war."⁴⁸ Corwin later asserted that he had written to his friends at the convention forbidding the use of his name for the Presidency. Yet, until it became certain that he could not be nominated, his friends worked furiously in his behalf and one of his most ardent supporters said that, if necessary, the convention should be blown to atoms to secure it.⁴⁹ In October, 1847, Corwin had indeed written to Giddings that if he had a

⁴⁷ Corwin to J. R. Giddings, Lebanon, Aug. 19, 1847, Giddings MSS.

⁴⁸ Holt, *Party Politics*, 287-90.

⁴⁹ Teesdale to McLean, Jan. 20, 1848, McLean MSS.; Corwin to Caleb B. Smith, Lebanon, May 10, 1848, C. B. Smith MSS. (in Library of Congress).

certainty of election he might yield to "the promptings of an irrational ambition" but that, under the circumstances he felt a repugnance or at least an indifference toward a nomination.⁵⁰ Now, in February, 1848, he informed his friends that he was not a candidate, and he personally told McLean that he hoped the latter would succeed. The justice was somewhat perplexed and wrote: "He is the greatest anomaly I have known. I cannot understand him. His friends seem to use him as they please for any and every purpose."⁵¹

At any rate, Corwin plainly saw that he could not rally to his support a united antislavery phalanx or the moderate Whigs who deplored his violent antiwar attitude. Some of Corwin's friends would not support McLean, another Ohioan, for such support might prejudice their favorite's chances in the future. McLean continued to hope that he might prove to be a compromise candidate of the discordant Whig forces. His friend, John C. Wright, editor of the *Cincinnati Gazette*, published long editorials stressing his ability, his party loyalty, and his sound opinions. McLean himself made efforts to secure control of the *Ohio State Journal* and helped finance a tour of the State by John Teesdale to interest editors in his candidacy.

A number of prominent politicians showed a keen interest in McLean's availability, but no popular enthusiasm developed, and the Corwin men could not be induced to throw their support to him. Corwin himself hardly knew which way to turn. Prodded by the McLean men, in May, Corwin declared that the justice had been known to be an "*uncertain—vacillating* and unreliable" Whig, hence no delegates had been chosen from Ohio to the national convention in his favor.⁵²

Taylor apparently was overwhelmingly popular in the country as a whole but, outside of Cincinnati, Ohio seemed thoroughly opposed to his nomination. Many Ohio Whigs showed a definite

⁵⁰ Oct. 12, 1847, Giddings MSS.

⁵¹ McLean to Teesdale, Washington, Feb. 15, 1848, Teesdale MSS.

⁵² Corwin to Smith, May 10, 1848, Smith MSS.

interest in Clay and Winfield Scott as possible leaders of the party in 1848. The former had been, of course, the magnetically popular leader of former years, but when he announced his availability for the nomination, even his old friend Ewing recognized that the Kentuckian had yielded to his "master passion" and that he could not be elected.⁵³ Such strength as Scott possessed in Ohio existed chiefly in the northern part as a result of a feeling that only a military man could defeat Taylor for the nomination.⁵⁴

As the weeks passed it became increasingly clear that Taylor would be the choice of the Whig convention, regardless of Ohio's attitude, and Ewing was concerned as to what might be done to prevent such a secession from the party in Ohio as would "utterly destroy" it in the State. He insisted that the claims of Taylor's competitors should be fairly presented at the national convention.⁵⁵ At that convention in Philadelphia, June 5, 1848, Samuel Galloway of Columbus, presented McLean's name but quickly withdrew it when it was apparent that the justice would have secured only seventeen votes. The State delegation supported Scott until Taylor was nominated; then, Joseph Vance of Ohio seconded a motion to make the selection unanimous. Vance, like Ewing and others, had opposed Taylor, fearing that his nomination would disrupt the party in Ohio, but now he endeavored to avert the threatened disunity of the organization. Strenuous efforts were made in Ohio to arouse enthusiasm among the Whigs for Taylor's candidacy, but there were wholesale repudiations of the nomination, although Corwin with reluctance finally accepted the candidate.

The Democrats likewise faced a problem in 1848. Most of the newspapers and county conventions of the party in Ohio had endorsed Cass, and Medary and Allen, both disappointed in their relations with the Polk Administration, were willing to acquiesce

⁵³ Thomas Ewing to John J. Crittenden, May 20, 1848, Ewing Letters (in Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society Library).

⁵⁴ Elisha Whittlesey to McLean, Washington, May 11, 1848, McLean MSS.

⁵⁵ Ewing to Crittenden, May 20, 1848, Ewing Letters.

in his nomination. A small group of antisouthern Democrats, including Tappan and Brinkerhoff, however, looked upon Cass as an "arch-doughface" and were unwilling to support him. At the national convention at Baltimore, May 22, 1848, Cass was nominated on the fourth ballot. A quarter of a century later, Allen claimed that at one point in the convention he was offered the party nomination but that he urged the nomination of Cass. Allen's belated recollections do not wholly conform to the facts and may well be discounted, but Cass's nomination was favorably received by the party in Ohio except for the antislavery or anti-southern members.⁵⁶

Developments in both major parties seemed to demand a change in policy on the part of the antislavery forces. In 1846, the Liberty Party in Ohio reached the peak of its vote-securing power, when it polled 10,797 votes. The next year, there was not even a State convention.⁵⁷ Chase, as a practical politician, hoped to bring about the fusion of the Liberty men with the major party that would adopt its principles. For a time, Chase had hoped that in 1848 the Liberty men might unite with the Whigs in support of McLean, but when the Whigs seemed bent upon the nomination of Taylor, and the death of Silas Wright of New York apparently removed the possibility of the nomination of an acceptable Free Soil man by the Democrats, Chase renewed his interest in the development of a strong third-party movement.

The Liberty men of the country in Buffalo, October, 1847, had scorned the ideas of their friends in Ohio, who favored the alliance with a major party, and had nominated John P. Hale of New Hampshire for the Presidency. As circumstances developed, however, Chase himself by March, 1848, was busying himself with a movement for a Free Territory Convention to meet in Columbus if McLean should not be nominated by the Whigs. By May 20, an appeal for such a gathering had been signed by three thousand

⁵⁶ Holt, *Party Politics*, 305-11.

⁵⁷ T. C. Smith, *Liberty and Free Soil Parties in the Northwest* (New York, 1897), 97-9.

voters of thirty counties and had been published in the *Cincinnati Gazette*. After the nomination of Taylor, the convention met in Columbus, June 21, and in accordance with the plans of certain dissatisfied Whigs who had consulted after the nomination at Philadelphia, a call for a national convention of Free Soil men was issued. The possibility of the nomination of McLean by such a united antislavery gathering was made less likely by the selection of Van Buren on June 22, by a state convention of Barnburners, antislavery New York Democrats.

The Liberty Party in Ohio, which held a separate convention in Columbus on June 21, was soon absorbed into the larger Free Soil movement. The Ohio Central Committee of Free Soilers urged McLean to permit his name to be presented for the Presidency at the national Free Soil Convention at Buffalo. Giddings wrote that some wanted the justice for President, others for Vice-President, but that an acceptance of either nomination would certainly lead to his election to the Presidency in 1852. Chase expressed his personal preference for him for the Presidency but declared that the success of the cause demanded a Van Buren-McLean ticket. On July 28, McLean informed the Free Soil committee that his judicial position, his failure to be supported by the Ohio delegation to the Whig National Convention, and Van Buren's role in the movement, made it necessary for him to decline. On August 4, however, burning ambition prompted him to open the door slightly again by suggesting that he would not necessarily refuse the nomination if public sentiment demanded it. But Chase did not present his name to the committee of conferees at the convention, and Van Buren and Charles Francis Adams became the party candidates. Later Chase was accused of having withdrawn McLean's name without authorization, a charge which he denounced as a "lie."⁵⁸

In Ohio, the Free Soil Party embraced Liberty men, antisouthern Whigs with conservative views, liberal Whigs, and some radical Democrats, *e.g.*, Norton S. Townshend of Lorain County. In

⁵⁸ Weisenburger, *John McLean*, 133-8.

their appeals to the voters a definite effort was made to interest the less prosperous classes who wanted such reforms as a Homestead Law, and on the Reserve many of the party leaders were connected with the National Reform Association which opposed all special privileges and land monopolies in particular. This radical appeal of the Free Soilers prompted the Democrats to assume a more liberal position, for in Ohio they had long proclaimed themselves the protector of the common man and the enemy of privileged interests. On the other hand, the Whigs tended to become more conservative as the protectors of legitimate property rights and established institutions. Some Democrats joined the new party at least partly because of personal jealousies. Former Democrats who became aligned with the Free Soilers included Benjamin Tappan, James W. Taylor, Brinkerhoff, George M. Swan of Columbus, Charles Cist of Cincinnati, and several party leaders at Dayton.⁵⁹ Among recent converts from the Whig fold were Giddings, Congressman Joseph M. Root of Norwalk, and a host of less prominent men.

The Whigs in Ohio were definitely dissatisfied with Taylor's candidacy, but Van Buren made less appeal according to Giddings, than almost any other possible nominee. Yet, many antisouthern Whigs ultimately supported the New Yorker, in spite of their memories of violent opposition to him in previous Presidential campaigns. Ohio Democrats were not strongly opposed to Cass's candidacy, yet it was easier for a dissatisfied Democrat than for a dissatisfied Whig to support Van Buren. Allen and Medary, in spite of former antagonism toward Cass, campaigned for him in the State. Ohio Democrats were almost universally opposed to slavery extension, and Democratic orators argued that with Cass, a northern man and a former resident of Ohio, in the Presidency, his doctrine of popular sovereignty would properly safeguard northern interests.⁶⁰ The Whigs made considerable use of letters

⁵⁹ Holt, *Party Politics*, 329-33.

⁶⁰ The story of the 1848 campaign in Ohio is told in E. H. Price, "Election of 1848 in Ohio," *O.S.A.H. Quar.* (Columbus), XXXVI (1927), 188-311.

written by Taylor to Captain J. S. Allison intimating that as President he would not use the veto power to obstruct the antislavery views of Congress, but the Democrats replied that Taylor was, after all, a Louisiana slaveholder, and that his published statements were certainly ambiguous. Especially on the Western Reserve the antislavery Whigs were, to a large extent, unconvinced of Taylor's acceptability, and the drift toward Van Buren continued.

The Whigs in Ohio attacked Cass as an enemy of internal improvements and tried to interpret his actions as minister to France in 1841 as evidence of his defense of the international slave trade; but the Democrats defended him as a genuine friend of internal improvements and, in connection with his foreign mission in France, as an upholder of American traditions of resistance to the right of search. In an appeal to the vote of the increasingly large numbers of Germans and Irish in Ohio, the Democrats pointed to the nativist tendencies of the Whigs and to the interest of the Democratic Party in the plight of the underprivileged; and they once again secured the votes of the vast majority of the newcomers.

The election was complicated by the situation in relation to the governorship. The Whig nominee, Seabury Ford of Burton, Geauga County, as a child of five had come with his parents from Connecticut. His father had prospered, and the son had been educated at a local academy before entering Yale where he graduated in 1825. Returning home he had studied law and had developed a successful practise. Later, he had served a number of terms in the legislature and had been speaker of both the lower and upper houses. Personally, he was a quiet, unassuming individual and a devout member of the Congregational Church.⁶¹ As leader of the Whigs in Ohio in 1848 he studiously endeavored to prevent antislavery Whigs from deserting the State ticket. Hence, he carefully refrained from expressing himself on the Taylor candidacy, though Democrats charged that the Whig Central Committee had

⁶¹ *Biographical Cyclopaedia and Portrait Gallery of Ohio* (Cincinnati, 1883), I, 179-80.

commanded silence on the question after destroying a letter in which he had expressed his views. In general, the Free Soil men supported Ford rather than John B. Weller of Butler County, the Democratic nominee. Weller, thirty-six years old, had been graduated from Miami University, had been county prosecuting attorney, congressman for three terms, and had risen from the rank of private to that of colonel in the Mexican War. Weller was attacked by the Whigs as a rabid Locofoco. To antislavery men he seemed to be an "arch-doughface," for in Congress he had voted in favor of the "gag rule" in the House of Representatives and had introduced a resolution to censure Giddings for his effort to commit the House against any protection to the coastwise slave trade. His services in the Mexican War, moreover, seemed to testify unmistakably to his interest in southern expansion. The sectional question was raised in another form by the proposed repeal of the State "black laws" restricting the Negroes. Ford apparently yielded to Free Soilers' demands and unequivocally favored the repeal of the laws, but the Democrats evaded the issue on the Reserve while opposing repeal in southern Ohio, where it was argued that the legislation protected the State from an unlimited influx of free Negroes. The outcome was the closest in the State's political history, with 148,756 votes for Ford to 148,445 for Weller. Clearly, Ford's non-committal attitude had not won for him all the votes of the Democratic Free Soilers, and in other parts of the State it had been charged that he was an abolitionist; hence the Whigs looked anxiously to the Presidential election of the following month.⁶²

During the summer and fall, Whig campaigners had strenuously endeavored to carry the State for their candidates. Corwin, most effective of Whig orators in Ohio, defended Taylor and his stand on the Wilmot Proviso with speeches on the Reserve and in other parts of the State. Corwin's role must have been a difficult one, for in Cleveland he was burned in effigy, and in his home town of Lebanon, he was accused by Giddings of having been

⁶² Price, "Election of 1848," 289ff.

"more servile" politically than Van Buren.⁶³ Early in September, Ewing had written:

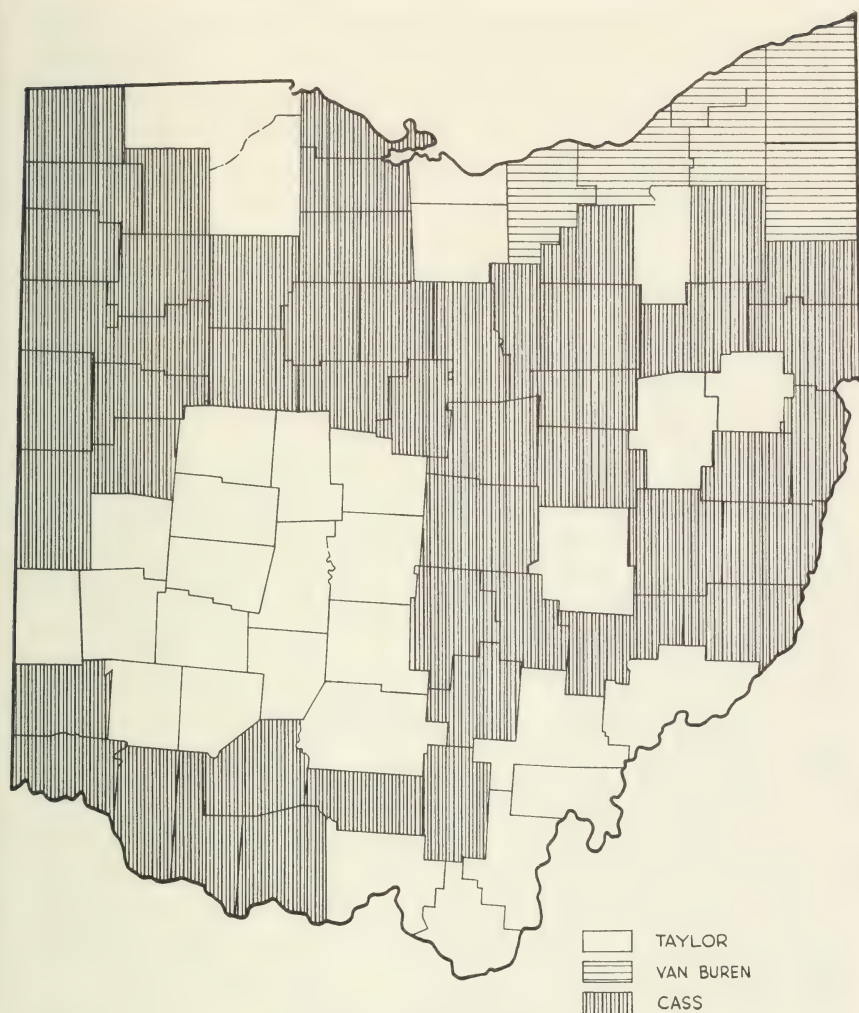
"I returned last evening from Athens where Mr. Vinton and myself addressed the people. We are using every possible effort to set things right but cannot judge with any confidence of the result. I have been constantly engaged since the people got through their harvest so they could hear me. . . . Vinton and Corwin are now busy and will be during the rest of the canvass. In short we will do all that is possible and *hope* success but cannot promise it. . . ." ⁶⁴ Two months later, Ewing wrote that in the meantime he had traveled through "all the counties in the Western Reserve except Lorain and in the most populous Quaker neighborhood in the Eastern part of the State bringing home" on his coat "a sample of the free soil from twenty-one counties." He felt that the Quakers would give Taylor little trouble but that the party would suffer a heavy loss in general on the Reserve. Even Delano made "all possible amends for past delinquencies" by touring the Reserve for the Whigs, and Francis Granger and William Henry Seward were brought from New York state to make a number of speeches. In addition, a host of minor campaigners were used, for although the Ohio Whigs felt confident that Taylor would carry the country, they wished to carry Ohio, and the Western Reserve was the critical section of the State.⁶⁵

The vote for the Presidency in Ohio was: Cass, 154,769; Taylor, 138,349; Van Buren, 35,344. Most of the Free Soil vote was cast on the Western Reserve, where Van Buren carried Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, and Trumbull, the only counties in the State in which he received a plurality. The third party vote was over four times what it had been in 1844 and would have been greater if Van Buren had not been very unpopular on the Reserve where 8,474 fewer votes were cast than in 1844. The Free Soil movement had wrought havoc among the Whig ranks of the

⁶³ J. R. Giddings to J. A. Giddings, Columbus, Oct. 8, 1848, Giddings MSS.

⁶⁴ Ewing to Crittenden, Lancaster, Sept. 8, 1848, Ewing Letters.

⁶⁵ *Id.* to *id.*, Nov. 3, 1848, *ibid.*



MAP 12. OHIO IN THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION OF 1848

From official returns in Columbus *Ohio State Journal*, November 24, 1848.

State. Giddings and others had definitely left the party; McLean had "deemed it prudent to refrain from any active effort" in the contest; and Vance, one of the active party campaigners, reported

that the maple-sugar growers of Ohio had reacted against slave-labor competition in the sugar-growing regions of Taylor's home state. It was significant that an important element in the Whig Party in Ohio had definitely repudiated the southern leadership in the party and that another step had been taken in the sectional movement which would lead to the formation of the Republican Party in 1854-55.⁶⁶

A bitter controversy arose after the fall elections in Ohio as the legislators at Columbus prepared to organize. In January, 1848, the Whigs in the Senate had introduced a new apportionment bill, which provided, among other features, for the division of Hamilton County into two electoral districts. The Democratic members centered their opposition on this proposal and denounced the bill as unfair and unconstitutional. It passed the Senate, however, and, in somewhat amended form the House also. Thereupon, since final passage of the measure seemed imminent, Democratic members vacated their seats in the Senate so that there might be no quorum. The House, however, receded from its rather inconsequential amendments, and the measure was then signed and declared to be law. The Democratic legislators and party meetings throughout the State vehemently denounced the procedure. A State convention of the party, presided over at Columbus, May 10, by Rufus P. Spalding and attended by its prominent leaders, asserted that there was now no law for the formation of the legislature after October and that the governor should call an extra session to formulate a new apportionment bill. It threatened that in the absence of such action by the governor Democrats elected in October would refuse to take their seats.⁶⁷

The Whig apportionment law had provided that in Hamilton County one senator and two representatives should be elected within the city of Cincinnati and one senator and three representatives in the rest of the county. The Democrats, contending that the division was unconstitutional, urged their partisans to vote

⁶⁶ Holt, *Party Politics*, 349.

⁶⁷ The discussion of the apportionment act is based on Holt, *Party Politics*, 352ff.

for all five representatives. Hence, when the votes were counted, according to the Whig view, two members of their party had been chosen to the lower house from Hamilton County, but according to the Democrats, five Democratic members had been elected. Certificates of election were issued by the clerk of the court to the Democratic contenders. If the two Whigs were denied their seats, the Democrats and Democratic Free Soilers would control the lower house of the legislature. At the same time control of the Senate was in doubt, and uncertainty existed as to the constitutional eligibility of one elected member of each house. Such a situation did not promise harmony in a session when a United States senator and many state officers were to be chosen.

When the members of the House assembled, various compromises were proposed to bring about a formal organization, but they failed until it was agreed (through the mediation of Townshend, a Free Soiler) that all uncontested seats should be occupied and the question of the two contested seats from Hamilton County should be decided later. As discussions took place in the public press and among the legislators, Townshend and John F. Morse, Free Soilers who leaned toward the Democratic Party on economic questions, were convinced that the apportionment law was unconstitutional and that the Whigs were attempting to absorb the Free Soil organization. Hence, they voted with the Democrats to seat the two contesting Democrats from Hamilton County and the House was organized, after weeks of delay and much political maneuvering, with John G. Breslin of Seneca County as speaker.

Since the parties were evenly balanced in the Senate, the seating of the two Democrats in the House gave that party control of the legislature as a whole, and before voting to accomplish that end, Townshend and Morse had participated in a shrewd bargain. The Free Soilers in Ohio were intent upon bringing about a repeal of the "black laws" and would cooperate with no party which would not aid that objective. The Whigs during the campaign of 1848 had advocated repeal, but during the Free Soil State Convention in Columbus in December Chase had secured the ad-

herence of the third party men to liberal economic views advocated by the Democrats such as a ten-hour law, opposition to corporations and the Kelley Banking Act, and a new constitutional convention. This action pleased many Democratic leaders so much that they told Chase that the two parties might cooperate even to the extent of repealing the "black laws."

Chase was in Columbus during December and January, in intimate touch with Free Soil and Democratic leaders. Albert G. Riddle wrote from the Ohio House of Representatives at this time: "Chase is a noble man but as ambitious as Julius Caesar and he has certainly favored the Democrats to an almost dangerous extent."⁶⁸ Indeed, it was Chase who formulated the proposal to seat the Democratic representatives from Cincinnati and the bill to repeal the "black laws." The Free Soilers secured a written promise from the Democrats to support repeal, and it was agreed that the Democrats would vote for Chase for senator.

The Senate seat to be filled was that occupied by Allen, who was not disinclined to another term. Allen, however, was rejected by the antislavery men because of his lack of sympathy for their principles and was less popular than formerly among the Ohioans of his own party, for his alleged Presidential ambitions had caused the Polk Administration to turn a deaf ear to his patronage requests. Giddings would have been acceptable to the Free Soilers, but his desertion of the Whig Party in 1848 had made him unpopular among former friends. Indeed, Giddings recognized this when he wrote in his diary: "Many strangers of distinction call upon me daily but my old friend Gov. Vance was in the house today. I saw him among the members but he did not approach me. He and many other Taylor men appear to have a dislike to me."⁶⁹ Clearly no successful combination could be achieved for Giddings, and for a time McLean's name received considerable attention. Before the election of 1848, McLean had been approached with an offer of Whig support for the senatorship, if he

⁶⁸ Albert G. Riddle to J. R. Giddings, Hall of Reps., Jan. 15, 1849, Giddings MSS.

⁶⁹ Entry for Feb. 24, 1849, MS. Diary.

would openly support Taylor's candidacy. A group of politicians later called upon him to seek permission to use his name, but he refused; and when the Whig caucus considered him as one upon whom a test of strength should be made, he at once telegraphed to withdraw his name.⁷⁰

In the first ballot in the legislature Allen received twenty-seven votes, but thereafter the Democrats supported Chase, and on the fourth ballot he was declared elected, with fifty-five votes to thirty-nine for Ewing, eleven for Giddings, and one for J. C. Vaughn.⁷¹ Other parts of the bargain were then carried out with the repeal of the "black laws," the election of two Democratic State Supreme Court judges (Rufus P. Spalding and W. B. Caldwell), and the selection of other State judges. The election of Chase was applauded by some Democratic papers and denounced by others, while Whigs deplored the whole arrangement as a "corrupt political bargain." From the standpoint of antislavery men, a man of their faith had been elected to the Senate from Ohio but in the process the Free Soil Party in the State had been well-nigh wrecked.

During the same winter there was much conjecture as to how Ohio might fare under the Taylor Administration. In 1848, as in 1844, Ohio's electoral vote had been cast for the unsuccessful Presidential candidate, and the bitterness expressed toward Taylor in Ohio was not a recommendation for the President's favor. Ohio leaders, however, urged Ewing for a cabinet position; former Governor William Bebb wrote to John J. Crittenden to advocate the appointment; and Taylor indicated that he wished to show his appreciation of the efforts of the old-line Whigs. Ewing would have preferred a seat in the Senate, but that coveted place had gone to Chase. Samuel F. Vinton, Ewing's campaign associate in 1848, however, piloted a bill through Congress for the creation of a new Department of the Interior, and Taylor appointed Ewing its first chief. Naturally, many of the applications for Federal office on the part of Ohioans went to Ewing, who seemed to be

⁷⁰ Weisenburger, *John McLean*, 139-140.

⁷¹ Smith, *Liberty and Free Soil Parties*, 171.

very successful in obtaining places for ambitious party members.⁷² His own son, Thomas, Junior, became private secretary to Taylor. Elisha Whittlesey became first comptroller of the treasury, a place which he was to hold until 1857. An Ohio appointment, obtained through the influence of William H. Prescott, the historian, was that of Ephraim George Squier, who had been publisher of the *Scioto Gazette* and clerk of the Ohio House of Representatives. He became *chargé d'affaires* to Central America, where he signed an agreement with Nicaragua, never ratified but of considerable significance at the time, for the American construction of an Isthmian canal.⁷³

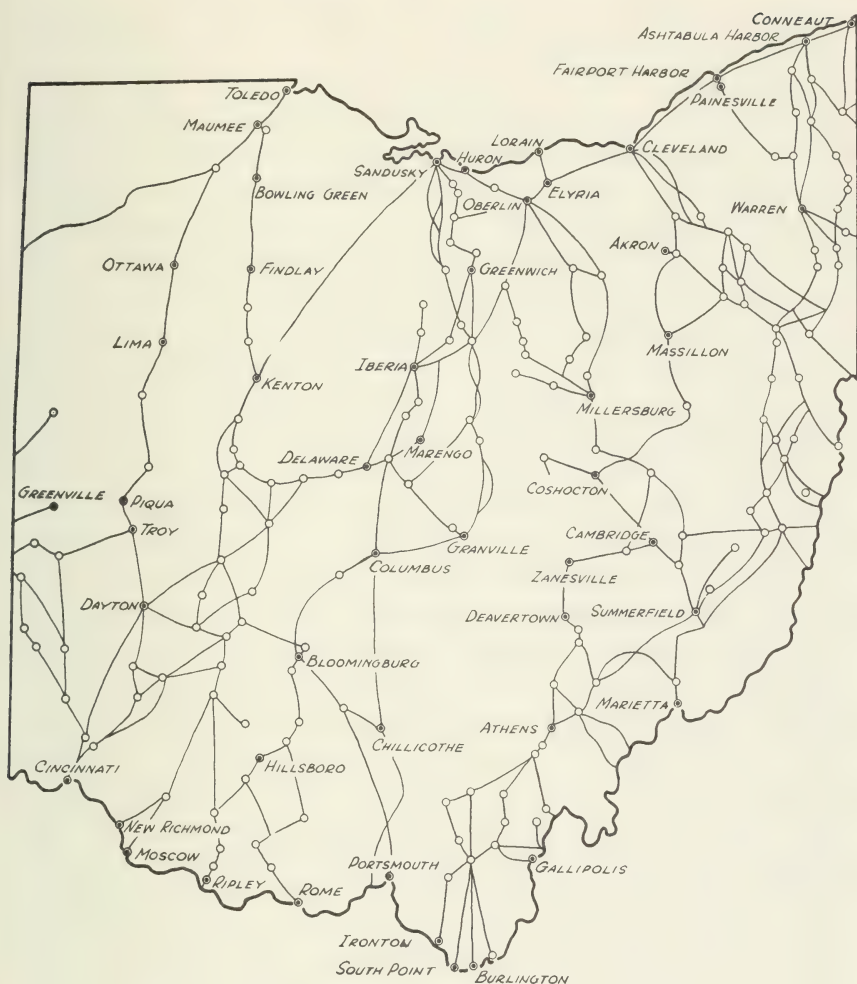
Ohio Democrats denounced the new Federal Administration, and Giddings, a Free Soiler, did his best to embarrass it. Giddings prophesied that the Whigs would not be able to maintain their party organization in view of the questions raised over the extension of slavery and fugitive slave legislation, and he predicted that if the Southern States seceded from the Union, Taylor would go with them.⁷⁴ In Ohio in 1850, the Whig State Convention took a strong antislavery stand adopting the Wilmot Proviso as part of its platform. The Democrats in their State convention again denounced "slavery as an evil in any part of the Union" and asserted that Ohioans felt obliged "to prevent its increase, to mitigate, and finally to eradicate the evil." The Free Soil men, after a year of fusion with the major parties, held two thinly attended conventions and nominated a candidate for governor.

In July, 1850, Taylor died suddenly, and Millard Fillmore succeeded to the Presidency. The new Chief Executive, in reorganizing the cabinet, obtained Ewing's resignation, effective July 22, and appointed Corwin as his secretary of the treasury. By appointment of Ford, Ewing succeeded to Corwin's seat in the upper house. Doubtless Ewing at this time must have pondered

⁷² Miller, "Thomas Ewing," 211-6.

⁷³ McLean to Whittlesey, June 7, 1849, Whittlesey MSS.; *Dict. Amer. Biog.*, XVII, 488-9.

⁷⁴ J. R. Giddings to J. A. Giddings, Feb. 3, 1850, Giddings MSS.



MAP 13. THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD IN OHIO

Based upon a map in Wilbur H. Siebert, *The Underground Railroad from Slavery to Freedom* (New York, 1898), fold. insert between p. 112-3.

over the factors which had brought Fillmore rather than himself to the Presidency. In the Whig Convention of 1848, after Corwin's name had been withdrawn, Lewis D. Campbell of Ohio nominated Scott but found that it was impossible to prevent Taylor's

selection. Campbell was then one of those who wished to present a party platform, a proposal which the party leaders promptly rejected. The Taylor forces, however, wished to placate the Clay Whigs and proposed Ewing for Vice-President. Campbell without authority from Ewing or any other person withdrew Ewing's name. Sulking as a result of his own frustrated efforts he declared that Ohio wanted "no sugar plums." Possibly that unauthorized action unwittingly resulted in the elevation of Fillmore rather than Ewing to the Presidency.⁷⁵

During the summer of 1850, Congress was much concerned with the proposals for sectional peace, known as the Compromise of 1850. In the Senate, Chase was a leader of the opponents of any concessions to the South, and Ewing generally voted with him and other northerners of Free Soil tendencies. For two weeks during August, however, when the Senate passed the new Fugitive Slave Law and the bill to organize New Mexico as a territory, Ewing's vote was not recorded on roll calls.⁷⁶ The Fugitive Slave Law was of course very unpopular in antislavery circles. The earlier Fugitive Slave Law of 1793 had been evaded for years by the elaborate organization known as the Underground Railroad. This movement for the surreptitious transportation of slaves from the South to freedom in Canada had been definitely organized in Ohio as early as 1815-1817, but the period of greatest activity began about 1840. More stations existed in Ohio than in any other state. In southern Ohio they were very numerous and included the home of Rev. John Rankin at Ripley. The lines extended in network fashion across the State, converging at eight terminal points along the lake, Ashtabula Harbor, Painesville, Cleveland, Sandusky, Toledo, Huron, Lorain, and Conneaut.⁷⁷ At times, of course, this movement ran into obstructions created by southern slave owners who appealed to the courts for the return of their property. The

⁷⁵ Miller, "Thomas Ewing," 206-7.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 240-1.

⁷⁷ W. H. Siebert, *Underground Railroad from Slavery to Freedom* (New York, 1898), 37-40, 146.

number of fugitive slave cases in Ohio increased after 1840. The *Prigg v. Pennsylvania* (1842) decision of the United States Supreme Court placed upon Federal authorities the sole responsibility for the execution of the law of 1793, hence Ohio in 1843 repealed her own statute of 1839 for the return of fugitives but retained legislation prohibiting the kidnapping of colored persons in Ohio. Between 1843 and 1850, fugitive slave cases in Ohio were primarily the concern of the Federal courts and included the famous *Van Zandt* case, in which Chase and Seward were attorneys for John Van Zandt, an aged abolitionist who was sued for harboring and concealing fugitive slaves. The United States Supreme Court in 1847 decided against Van Zandt.⁷⁸

When the stricter Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 was passed, public opinion on the Western Reserve deplored the measure, and partisan feeling was forgotten in a whole-hearted opposition to it. Elsewhere in Ohio, public meetings counseled disobedience to the law as an obligation to God and to humanity.⁷⁹ Yet, to many, especially those interested in southern trade, the sectional bickerings had become tiresome, and enthusiastic union meetings, condemning further agitation of the slavery question, since the compromise was to be regarded as a finality, were held at Dayton and Cincinnati.

In State politics, the repeal of the Apportionment Act was an issue during 1849, but the election results proved rather indecisive. In the House six Free Soilers held the balance, since the Democrats had approximately thirty-six members to about thirty-six Whigs and Free Soilers. Finally, it was arranged that the Democrats and Free Soilers should unite to elect Benjamin F. Leiter (Democrat) of Stark County, speaker, and Stanley Matthews (Free Soiler) of Cincinnati, clerk. Leiter was elected, but the angered Whigs determined to wreck the rest of the bargain and contrived to elect a Democratic clerk. Thereupon, to conciliate the Free

⁷⁸ Leo Alilunas, "Fugitive Slave Cases in Ohio prior to 1850," *O.S.A.H. Quar.*, XLIX (1940), 160-84.

⁷⁹ Smith, *Liberty and Free Soil Parties*, 227.

Soilers, Matthews was chosen secretary of state. In the Senate, the apportionment controversy resulted in a dispute over the seating of the members from Hamilton County, and the outcome involved a possible tie for control of the upper house. Much maneuvering took place before, on the three hundred first ballot, Harrison G. Blake, Whig Free Soiler of Medina County, was chosen speaker. John R. Knapp, radical Democrat from Marion, was then elected clerk. Legislative troubles continued, however, and Blake was accused of having violated the bargain which had made him speaker. He resigned, and ultimately the Democrats and Whig Free Soilers made another bargain, by which Charles G. Converse, a Muskingum County Whig, was chosen speaker for the rest of the session, and the part of the Apportionment Law which had divided Hamilton County, was repealed.

The same session of the legislature issued a call for a second constitutional convention. For almost a decade, considerable feeling had been expressed that the provision of the Constitution of 1802 that required the holding of the supreme court each year in each county was hardly workable in view of the large number of counties. As early as 1840, the conservative Democrat, Thomas L. Hamer, had asserted that the inefficiency of Ohio's judicial system was "daily becoming more and more manifest" and had come to amount almost "to a denial of justice."⁸⁰ A growing demand, moreover, had arisen for the limitation of the State debt, for the restriction of the tendency to create new counties, for the more extensive control of corporations, for the prohibition of special chartered privileges, for the popular election of State officials, and for a more equitable system of taxation. In general, the Democrats had advocated such reforms, with a constitutional convention as the means of achieving them, but on various occasions (as in the legislative session of 1847-48) the Whigs had defeated a proposal for a popular referendum on the calling of a constitutional convention. At length, the Free Soilers joined forces with the Democrats in the cause of reform. Riddle, a

⁸⁰ Holt, *Party Politics*, 403.

Whig Free Soiler, denounced the Whigs for their opposition, declaring that their party belonged "essentially to the past, and with the past" was destined to perish.⁸¹ Some Whigs, including the governor, William Bebb, lent their support to the movement, but others continued to express a fear of radical views among the Democrats on matters relating to property and the currency. In March, 1849, Whig legislators reluctantly acquiesced in the submission of the question to the voters. The Cleveland *Daily True Democrat* rejoiced: "The leading papers on all sides say 'A Convention, a new Constitution.' The people echo back the cry."⁸² Even then many Whigs resisted the movement for change, but Samuel Medary aggressively demanded that the "regenerating spirit" of reform should not be lost in Ohio and published a special weekly paper *The New Constitution* as a contribution to the cause. When the balloting took place in October, 145,698 favored the holding of a convention, 51,161 opposed, and 38,511 who voted on other matters did not cast a ballot on this question. In November, a change in editorship of the *Ohio State Journal* eliminated the opposition of that paper to a new constitution.⁸³

The legislature in February, 1850, issued the formal call for the choice of delegates to the Constitutional Convention which convened at Columbus in May. Meeting during 1850 and 1851 in the capital city, and for a time in Cincinnati, the members of the convention framed the instrument of government under which, with many amendments, the political machinery of the State still operates. Their work ushered in a new era in the history of the State!

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 405.

⁸² Apr. 3, 1849.

⁸³ Holt, *Party Politics*, 407.

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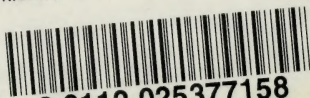


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